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UNDER THE MISTLETOE.

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I.

LACK hair, long enough and strong enough for the Carthaginian bow-strings, splendid black hair falling all about her like a veil of night !

I always did hate black hair, and I never knew such coarse, rank, luxuriant hair of any color that did not belong to a coarse temperament.

This especial black hair, whenever in all my life since I have had any trouble, has swept before my eyes as if it were the very cloud in which the trouble shrouded itself. But always, to offset it, there rises also before my eyes a face, fine, strong, and beautiful, the look of whose dark, kind eyes is a benediction, my husband's face; and all my trouble vanishes as mist does when the sun shines on it.

I was only the housekeeper's daughter; but the housekeeper had been a lady. Had been a lady? My mother *was* a lady, high caste and thorough-bred. But when my father died he was launched in such enterprises that everything went with him, and old Mr. Ponsonby, my father's friend, gave her charge of his mansion and household affairs. Some years later old Mr. Ponsonby had died, and young Mr. Ponsonby, Mr. Pierrepont Ponsonby, who had been with his uncle but occasionally in my remembrance, reigned in his stead, and I was still

staying with my mother, recovering my health before taking the place engaged for me as governess, where I should have been now but for this illness, in whose long convalescence my mother felt I must be with her. Scrupulous to the last degree of nicety, she meant to retain me in this bachelor establishment, even while under her own care, no longer than was necessary.

Perhaps I had my own ideas on the matter: a girl usually knows when any one is in love with her. Yet I knew, too, that Mr. Pierrepont Ponsonby's wishes and ambitions were wishes and ambitions that made it important to marry or make a fortune and thus increase his own. But could I fail to feel, also, what the sudden flush meant, the lingering glance, and again the avoiding eye? And I said to him in my thoughts, " You are really despicable," and if my thoughts had run otherwise, I would not have given him a suspicion of it, but have held my head high with the smiling indifference of a woman sufficient to herself.

And yet life had been very sweet to me in the September days of rich softness, when the year paused full of ripeness; in the red October days, wandering under the illumination of the woods, through their scarlet and gold, and green glooms, and damp sunshine; in the chill November days, when the wood fire was beckoning us home with its fragrant blaze, where we could sit beside the hearth and let the time go by without speaking till startled by some sound outside

our sphere of dreaming; pleasanter, I say, was life then (for all my knowledge that it was idle temptation to impossibility) than in these December days, when the Assyrian had come down on the fold with his cohorts all gleaming in purple and gold: that is to say, a score of the rich Ponsonby cousins and their friends to pass the holidays, and among them this Juliet, with her black hair and her million dollars. And from the day they came, he scarcely seemed to see me and had hardly a word or a glance for me.

It was not so, I thought, that Mr. Nevers would have treated me. Somehow, pleasant as days were with Mr. Pierrepont, it was to Mr. Nevers that my thoughts turned in my grievance. And among all these people of fortune and of smooth paths, the other should have seen to it that I was given honor; I, who had been his uncle's care, who had closed his uncle's poor, tired eyes at last; I, who was penniless and had laborious ways to tread, perhaps my life long.

Old Mr. Ponsonby had meant to provide some fixed income for my mother and myself; but he had died without a will, and if his nephew had known of his intention, we could not accept anything from him; and now I was to leave what had been my home of luxurious ease and go out into the world and fight my way, and I found myself looking forward eagerly to the day of my going, for here and now I was fighting my way more literally than I should ever be when at my outside work. For while these ignored, and those patronized, and a few accorded friendly equality, this black-haired Juliet, choosing to single me out as a special foe, waged coarse and open war, and gave stinging insults that it sometimes made me cry in the night to remember.

I would not make my mother more unhappy by complaint. I felt forsaken and forlorn when I thought how impossible it was to turn to Mr. Pierrepont; and then always the glance of Mr. Nevers brought peace, and it did not seem necessary even to tell him of these trivial troubles, since the very thought of him made them cease to be troubles. But more than once I realized now that in the sweet days of the late summer and early fall I had been drifting into something that was a mere pleasantness of the senses, and I thanked heaven that this interruption had not come too late! If

Juliet could content Mr. Pierrepont Ponsonby, after what he had known of better things, why, let him be contented!

I never before knew any young girl that so valued money, especially when already possessing it, as this Juliet did, and that so sordidly and distressingly knew the worth of it.

She came into my room one morning, on some excuse, with her hair down; she had a trick of letting it fall down when she wished a sensation; but she did not usually care enough about me to think a sensation in my behalf worth while. It was blowing about her now like a cloud as she hurried along.

"What would you think if you had to carry all this on your head?" she said.

I hesitated to tell her that I disliked her hair; but Olive Thayer, who was reading French with me that morning, said she should be delighted if she had to carry it.

"It's a great saving, anyway," said Juliet. "I don't have to spend a hundred dollars a year for new hair at the hair dresser's. I don't see how people without either hair or money get along. What do you do, Miss Featherstonhaugh?"

"I? Oh, I do without, you see," I said, laughing, for the fever had taken all the yellow locks and left me with a shock of short ringlets curling close to my head as a fleece.

"Perfect Greek, those short curls are," said Olive. "I would be glad to have your fever if it would leave me such a head!"

"Have you had a fever, Miss Featherstonhaugh?" asked Juliet. "Here? I should think you would have gone to a hospital."

Of course, I colored and made no reply.

"Why should she go to a hospital?" asked Amy Bellew impetuously, "when this is her mother's home?"

"Oh, everybody has her own ideas of propriety," said Miss Juliet. "And some people might consider a hospital the best place if they had no home of their own. It must be very odd, having no home of your own. I wonder how it feels."

"Perhaps you may find out some day," I said, for I was having all I could endure.

"Money takes wings, you know," said Verena Ponsonby, laughing.

"Not when it's well taken care of," said Juliet; "and mine is so settled that I defy it to get away. If the wharf property gives

out, there is the gas property, the warehouses, the blocks of buildings, the railroad stocks, the bank stocks, the government bonds, some savings bank hoards, some mortgages. The dividends come in so fast that sometimes I don't know what to do with them. But I keep them. Money is power. Money is more than brains or titles. If you have money, you can do anything. It's the only aristocracy now. And mine is always growing; for, you know, I never spend half my income, and every year there is the other half to re-invest."

"I should think it was wicked," I said, almost before I thought, "if I had your income, not to spend the whole of it, with all the distress there is in the world."

"Dear me! How do you know what my income is?"

"I have heard you mention it often enough," said I, taking up my book, that she might be gone, "to be quite familiar with the figures."

She stared at me a moment with her great coal-black eyes. "I don't suppose you know enough to know what insolence is," she said slowly then. "How should you, the housekeeper's daughter!"

"Juliet!" cried Olive and Verena.

"For my part, I don't know why the housekeeper's daughter is associating with Mr. Pierrepont Ponsonby's guests, anyway!" continued Juliet.

"There is one of his guests," I cried, "with whom she refuses to associate! And you will leave her room immediately!"

And as I started towards her—I'm sure I don't know why—she uttered a cry and shrank away, and ran off, slamming the door behind her.

II.

"I DIDN'T know but the little vixen was really going to strike me," she was saying that evening to Mr. Ponsonby. "Why, I actually screamed!"

"As if you had seen a mouse," he laughed.

How hurt and indignant I was! He could walk, and talk, and sit and read with me all that idle time before the house filled with people; but now he could hardly see me; and all his old pleasant intimations had been so hollow that he could laugh

about me with this creature and compare me to vermin!

When he turned and saw me sitting there, with my head bent over the book of pictures, I never raised it, although I felt sure by those subtle senses that never betray you, that he was gazing at me and waiting for a responsive gaze. But when Mr. Nevers came wheeling his chair along, I glanced up and smiled and made room for him beside me, although it took all my reserves to summon the smile; for Mr. Nevers had shown me a kind consideration in these dark days, and many days before, that touched my heart.

If I haven't told you about Mr. Nevers, it is time I did. I had known him only a little while in comparison to the length of time I had known Mr. Pierrepont, although I had, perhaps, known him better, and he was almost old enough to be my father, but we were the best of friends. He lived in one wing of his great house, and seldom visited anywhere but at Mr. Ponsonby's.

Now and then he had the Psyche put in commission and flitted away over seas to nobody knew what pleasures. Sometimes he was heard of off the lagoons of Venice; sometimes he was in a dahabéah floating up the Nile; sometimes he was rocking on a camel over the desert or exploring stone temples in Idumea; and then again he was unexpectedly seen calmly rolling down his lawns in his garden chair, as if he had never been away. He had a wonderful degree of strength, and perfect health. He was a collector of all sorts of curios, bronzes, armors, old chinas, Rembrandt engravings four inches square, worth more than a patine of bright gold of that size, and such books as made book-making seem an art as fine as cameo-cutting.

With all that, he was one of the men who, unknown to the world, are factors in affairs; for, detesting publicity and politics for himself, he never entered their arena; but senators, and secretaries, and judges, and their kind constantly asked his advice, and hardly a question of importance arose that the actors on the great scene did not seek consultation with him wherever he was to be found. He had no near relatives, and seemed to stand alone in the world. He had never married. He had a face fine, and strong, and beautiful; but (and I feel as if it

were a profanation and sacrilege to speak of it as though it mattered) he was a dwarf, not quite five feet tall, and with a crooked shoulder. Nobody was so delightful to look at when he sat, and few people, through the pitifulness of it, so painful to look at as he when he stood or walked, which, however, he seldom did, usually wheeling himself with swift skill and directness in his chair. And nobody was ever more delightful than he when he talked, with all his vast resources, his wisdom, and his wit, his gentleness and kind forbearance. When I listened to him I used to wonder that no woman had ever felt her heart moved enough by all that singular beauty and goodness and knowledge to become his wife; and tears filled my eyes so that I had to look away. And once I half wished I had never seen Pierrepont Ponsonby, in order that, if Mr. Nevers liked it so, I might make him the happier. I had a singular assurance, for all his silence there, that he would like it so. And yet—and yet—oh, I was very sure I did not, I never could love Mr. Nevers!

"Why do you look at me so sadly?" he asked once.

"I didn't know I did," I answered, startled and ashamed.

"I suppose you are pitying me," he said. "You must not. I need no pity. Few men are happier than I."

"I—I—really—I—"

"Oh, pray don't," he interrupted as I stammered on. "I have embarrassed you more than you have me. You are afraid, too, that you have hurt my feelings. I got over all that long ago. I regard my misfortune as of so little consequence beside my better reasons for content. You are thinking it a pity no woman will marry me. No, don't deny it! I can read your mind, you see.

'And all her thoughts as fair within her eyes
As bottom agates seem to wave and float
In crystal currents of clear morning seas,'"

he said. "Well, I thought it was a pity once, and it cost me some struggle to reconcile myself to the fact. But I have never asked one. I never shall. If such an impossible miracle should happen as that a good and lovely woman should wish, should be willing to marry me, and think she could find her happiness in it, I am not sure I should allow it."

"Not if she loved you?"

"I should need very deep assurance of that," he said smiling, with the light in his brown eyes.

"Oh, but how could you?"

He looked at me a moment.

"It may seem strange to you," he said, "but I have never allowed myself to love a woman. If I have found her beautiful or charming, I have left her out of hand. Such things, I early understood, were not for me."

"But—but—I don't think you are right," I stammered again. "Suppose—it might be—a question of her happiness."

He laughed like a boy. "I am afraid that would be impossible," he said.

"But if it were not?" I persisted.

"What? I'm sure I don't know. Well, if I found it were so, if I were able to deceive myself into such a blessed hope, I—I should give her some sign; I should tell her, for instance, that my pride was too great to ask any woman to take a deformed and shrunken husband—that—that—if she—oh, it's all too absurd to talk about!"

"You are absurd!" I said. "You will tell her, if she loves you, what?"

"I'm sure I don't know. After the deluge, what?"

"Tell her," said I, "that if she ever finds life impossible to live without you, to give *you* the sign. Tell her to take your hand some day and slip from it that ring you wear, the odd stone—it isn't the thing for a gentleman to wear anyway—and to put it on her own."

"Very well," he said laughing and turning his chair away. "That will do as well as anything. You tell her, if you ever come across her!"

And still laughing, he wheeled his way from the room.

III.

As the days went by now, upon my word I wondered at Mr. Ponsonby. I knew him so well that I knew what was agreeable, necessary, invaluable to him; and Juliet had not one of these things in her possession. She had a bold, showy beauty of the sort that he didn't prize, and she had qualities, in her rudeness, her selfishness, her temper, her coarse want of sensitiveness, and her assurance, that were offensive to him.

But yet a million dollars! What that

would do for the old Ponsonby place ! What that would do for the old Ponsonby name ; and if he had political ambition, as he had, that ambition whose qualification needs the expenditure yearly of small fortunes, how much that would do for the Ponsonby career ! It seemed to me that poverty and obscurity were a thousand times better than such ignoble wealth and prominence, and again I said to him in my thoughts, " You are despicable !" But it hurt me to say it, for all that.

I was playing some dance music later in the evening, a little crazy tarantella, a quaint gavotte of Bach, and trying to forget myself in that wild, sweet joy of others. He came and leaned against the corner of the mantel, gazing at me. I looked up half a second. Such a strange, long, sad, and troubled gaze was his ! I did not understand it. Suddenly the music forsook my fingers, and, pushing back the chair, I fled out of the room before I should lose all self-control. My mother met me and drew me into her sitting-room, and held my head on her knee, stroking my hair, but saying nothing till the clock struck eleven.

" Now," she said at last, " it is time to go to bed, or you will see the Ponsonby ghost. It always walks, in some shape or other, the night before Christmas here."

" Then it isn't due till to-morrow night," said Mr. Pierrepont, coming in, for the door stood ajar. " We will all sit up and see it and you shall tell us the legend, Mrs. Featherstonhaugh."

" I will tell you the legend now, Pierrepont, as your uncle told it to me," said my mother. " It is only the ghost of an old family failing of the Ponsonbys that walks. It is an exacting ghost. When they have offered it the sacrifice of what they most value, it will be laid."

" They ?" said Mr. Pierrepont. " Who are they ?"

" You," said my mother.

" What a terrible thing to be a plural—royal, editorial, and the gods on Caucasus, all shrunk to one Ponsonby man !"

" You will never seem a man to me," said my mother, " nor like the last of the Ponsonbys, and by no means like the head of the house. You always seem like the little boy whose jackets I mended, whose broken fingers I bound up, whose headaches I used to cure."

" And you are always just the same lovely Mother Featherstonhaugh to me that you were the first day that you come into this house and ordered me (I was making my annual visit then) a plate of bread and butter and an ocean of jelly. And when you took off the wraps and showed me your little rose-leaf of a baby, I thought she was the sweetest miracle in nature. And—and—"

Suddenly he stood up and looked at me where I sat on the hassock at my mother's feet, putting my disheveled hair in order.

" And I think so now !"

And then he strode out of the room.

" And he lets that Juliet girl talk so to a miracle of nature !" I cried indignantly. " And he is going to marry her million and let the miracle of nature go ! Well, there is one thing about it : the miracle of nature has some self-respect left !"

And my mother laughed.

" Why so excitable ?" said she. " You do not love him. It is only a silly pride of yours that is suffering mortification."

And then off I went to bed myself, but not for any great amount of sleep.

IV.

THE wind was blowing with a rising gale, bringing snow up the mountains ; and as I looked from the window in my restlessness an hour or two later, my lamp being out, I saw it driving by in great gusts of whiteness across the gulfs of gloom behind.

" Well, well," I said to myself. " A green Yule makes a fat churchyard ; and this is a very white Yule. There won't be many more people here, but the mistletoe will hang in the hall all the same."

I threw open the window to breathe the freshness of the gale a moment ; and at that moment I saw it. Light lay all around it on the driving snow, light like a slanting beam everywhere diffused upon the storm, and in the midst of all the light and whiteness a vast shadowy form, a man's form as plainly as I ever saw anything, a Ponsonby man's, only mighty and gigantic, and to my excited fancy terrible. What made it more terrible was that I could see no face, only where a face should be, perhaps a deeper shadow more full of dark suggestion. Strange to say, that beyond this first chill creeping of the blood, it did not alarm me.

" It does not come as an enemy," I said.

"There is something familiar about it. But if this is the Ponsonby ghost, why does it come to me?"

And I bent forward searchingly.

But what was this beside it? Another shape, dark upon the whiteness of the storm, a woman's shape, but again gigantic, and round it blowing out a cloud of shadowy hair, long, veiling, black as a Carthaginian's. And the woman bent as if bending towards me, and raised an arm—was it threateningly? And then, as if from a jewel on a long-extended hand, came a flash of light through all that blindness, and the two shapes bent together, and all at once the truth rushed over me, and in spite of myself I laughed a loud, clear, ringing laugh, and the two started apart. There was confusion of moving light and darkness where they had been, and then all light ceased and only the great white storm raved on.

So this was the end, then, of Pierrepont's doubts. He had solved the question. Well, he had solved it for me, too; it was the end of my doubts.

I lighted my lamp, and took out his photograph and placed it beside the drawing I had made of Mr. Nevers. One was all dark, slender, and sinuous grace; one was full of life, and fire, and power. One had proved weak and unworthy, if not treacherous; one was so strong that if he wished anyone's love, he would not ask for it. And yet, until very lately, I had thought I loved the one and did not love the other. Ah! what if those eyes that here gazed at me so kindly, so tenderly, had ever looked otherwise! What if they ever should! Always since my first remembrance of them they had held that gaze for me.

"If Pierrepont Ponsonby is despicable," I said, "so is a woman that does not know her own heart. But I have found out mine, and that without any so bitter test as tests might be!"

And all at once, as I sat there with my elbows on the table, looking at that drawing, I was wondering at myself, wondering what I had done in the years that I had known Mr. Nevers during his long absences and the weeks and months when I had never heard of him, and feeling with a sudden fire and intensity that never could I endure such absence and silence again and live. And he? Oh, that perhaps made little

odds. It was enough for me to love, bliss enough, contentment enough.

And yet I knew better. I knew now more fully what it needed no words from him to tell me. And I blew out my lamp and looked again at the vast, white storm sweeping as gladly as the blood swept in my veins, and went to sleep full of a deep and unspeakable joy, and only woke when day had long dawned, and found the white storm still raving on.

V.

I HAD plenty to do in my rooms that day; for I meant to be leaving the place presently and meant that my mother should go where I went, wherever that might be, and it was twilight of the early Christmas eve when I went down, and the servants were hanging up the holly and the mistletoe that had been brought in from the woods before the storm. I always had a sort of pleasant superstition about the mistletoe, for once an old, foreign gypsy had said to me that all my fate and fortune would turn on one moment under the mistletoe, and this quaint leaf and waxen berry of the Virginia woods might be as powerful as the genuine sprays brought in from over-seas. I lingered now, watching them hang it as if I assisted at some religious or incanting rite.

A group of the guests were sitting about the great hearth of the drawing-room, when I went in at last, their faces rosy in the blaze. Pierrepont started to his feet and took a step towards me, and then suddenly re-seated himself by Juliet as before, and Mr. Nevers, with his warm, welcoming smile, wheeled his chair aside to make room for me near him.

"Did you know that Juliet heard it?" cried Amy to me.

"Heard what?"

"Why, the ghost, you know, the Ponsonby ghost!"

"You don't say so! When—where—what was it like?"

"I didn't say I saw it," said Juliet with loftiness. "I heard it."

"Heard a ghost!"

"Yes, heard a ghost!" she cried snapishly. "And that's all there is about it."

"Oh, indeed!" and I was turning away indifferently.

"Yes, indeed!" she cried then. "And I

don't think you'd be so exceedingly calm if you had heard it. It was perfectly blood-curdling ! Oh ! so sharp, so high, so shrill, so piercing, so cruel, and mocking, and vindictive. Positively, I never heard so fierce a shriek of laughter; more like a yell of hate."

"Strange no one else heard it. Did you hear anything of the sort, Mr. Ponsonby?"

"Who? I?" he said with a start. "No, nothing, nothing of the sort," with an odd hesitation. "Of that sort, at least."

"Then it wasn't the Ponsonby ghost," I suppose."

"Oh!" cried Olive, "Mr. Ponsonby promised that your mother should tell us the ghost story on Christmas eve."

"That story will be told on many a Christmas eve yet," said I. "It is a ghost, I fancy, that never will be laid."

"What do you mean?" said Mr. Pierrepont sharply.

"Why? Do you know about it?" said Juliet.

"Oh, yes. And so does Mr. Ponsonby."

"And why will it never be laid?" she asked imperiously, as if she had a right to know.

"Oh, because, according to the legend of it, I suppose there never will be a Ponsonby willing to sacrifice the thing he loves best for the thing he loves second best."

"I'm sure I don't know what you are talking about!"

"It doesn't matter. But if he loves, for instance, a woman best, he will not sacrifice her for any money, and if he loves money best, he will not sacrifice that for any woman. By the way, I wonder if it was the ghost I saw that you heard."

"You? you saw a ghost?"

"I saw, looking from my window, at just about midnight, pausing on the storm, exactly as if treading a cloud of driving snow, a shadow, a regular Ponsonby shadow."

"You saw it? You really saw it?" cried one and another.

"And what did it do?" exclaimed Amy and Olive in a breath.

"Another shadow suddenly appeared beside it, the shadow of a woman whose hair had fallen about her—long hair, black as a cloud—and the shadows bent together; and I fancy—oh, I only fancy—I saw the first shadow make a motion as if it slipped a ring on the hand of the second shadow, this way."

And on the dark side of the firelight I had taken Mr. Never's hand, sliding the ring there from his finger, and lifting my left hand into the light, I slipped the ring on the betrothal finger, held it a moment in the glow of the blaze, and dropped my hand again over the side of the chair.

"Well, and what then," cried Amy and Olive again.

"Oh, nothing much." For Mr. Nevers had grasped that fallen hand of mine and held it in his own, tight as in a vise.

"But what happened?" persisted Verena.

"Oh, the light was blown out, maybe, or the ghosts remembered, if they were ghosts, that snow storms, and mist storms, and what not, are like quicksilver on the back of mirrors, when they stand posturing with a light behind them."

"Oh!" said Amy, in a tone of half-delighted disappointment. "It wasn't a ghost at all! It was a pair of lovers! Who do you suppose it was? I'm sure it wasn't I."

"Nor I," said Olive.

"Nor I!" said Mr. Nevers.

"Nor I," feebly stammered Juliet.

"It must have been some of the servants," said Verena.

"Servants to something, to others' caprices or their own," I said. "The woman's shadow had the build of a cook, I remember."

And then I was ashamed of my bit of spite.

"I am sure, though," I added, "that with all my heart I wish she may make a better wife than I think she will;" for, after all, spite would have the better of me.

And just then there was a commotion in the circle made by Jane's bringing in the tea.

"What do you mean by all this?" said Mr. Pierrepont, rising as the others rose, and coming over and standing a moment beside me.

"What should I mean?" said I.

"Do you imagine—can you imagine—is a man pledged by the act of a midnight romp, the gift of a ring, an idle kiss?"

"You will forgive me, Mr. Pierrepont," I began, half under my breath, "if I say that I neither know nor care."

"You do not care! Is it nothing to you, then, whether—"

"The friend of so many years, Mr. Pierre-

point, your choice of a wife would be a great deal to me. But as you choose a person that would not let me remain your friend, with whom you can even make me the subject of a jest, I must of necessity resign myself to letting your marriage mean nothing to me."

"It should mean everything to you!" he exclaimed hotly in his suppressed undertone. "I may have cheated myself into the wild endeavor to do without you. But it is impossible! I cannot! And when I saw you with that ring of Nevers on your hand, I thought I should go mad."

"Mr. Pierrepont," I said, "you are speaking to the woman that will be the wife of Mr. Nevers, or of no one."

"What!" he cried, forgetful of all ears, and then sinking his voice again. "Will you tell me," he said, that you—you, who have so believed in the sanctity of love, that you love, would marry that man, that hunchback!"

"I love as I never till now dreamed I could love," said I, "a man so noble that if he has one defect, I fail to remember it, whose beautiful face is the reflex of his beautiful soul, and without whom life would be a desert that I could not cross!"

And I moved away hurriedly and closed the door behind me, afraid lest tears of excitement, anger, and love should overflow my face.

VI.

I PAUSED a moment at the foot of the stairs, to get my breath, perhaps, when the drawing-room door opened again, and I heard the chair come wheeling swiftly down the hall.

"Stay a moment," said the voice that thrilled me. And Mr. Nevers caught the hand that still wore his ring. "You are playing with fire," he said hoarsely; "the fire of the eternities, the fire of heaven or hell. Do you—dare—let me dream—?"

I turned and looked at him as well as I could for the color streaming up my face and making my very eyelids heavy, and then I knelt down on the rug beside his chair.

"Do you want your ring back?" I whispered.

"And you," he said, as if in answer to me, "do you mean that you are going to be my wife?"

"You have never asked me," I whispered again.

"I never shall. Only—only—if you are—if I am not dreaming—if this is not some dear, mad, delusion, then wake me quickly!"

I put my arms up about his neck and kissed him.

"Is this real?" I said.

"My wife! My wife!" he murmured, clasping me.

And with that all the Christmas bells rang out, and I looked up and saw the mistletoe swinging over our heads, and hid my face on his breast.

"It is a bliss I have no right to, that I never dared hope for, that to pray for I should have thought blasphemy, that I did not look forward to even in heaven."

"Oh, heaven is here!" I said.

And just then the drawing-room opened, and the whole party came dancing out for their frolic under the mistletoe.

"Oh, my good gracious!" cried Juliet, starting back. "She had better talk about the Ponsonbys marrying for money! I suppose that's what all her rigmarole meant! And here she sells herself to a hunchback!"

"For shame!" cried Amy, as they all gathered about us.

"Oh, Juliet, on a Christmas eve!" said Verena.

But I only clasped him the closer. And then Pierrepont, very white and set, was speaking.

"Possibly the Ponsonbys marry for money; I wish some of them had before my time. But one of them has to-day had his hand rejected by the young lady of whom you speak, Miss Juliet. And there is nothing left for him but to pray heaven to bless his more fortunate friend whom she has already blessed."

And he wrung Mr. Nevers' hand, and the tears flowed from my eyes, and I am not sure that for just the one-half second I was not sorry I could not marry both of them, or that there were not two of me!

"I have known many Christmas eves," said Mr. Nevers, "since I was a child, but never one that brought any difference to my life till now. But I feel as if the world was made and life begun for me this Christmas eve!"

MY LADY POKAHONTAS.

BY J. ESTEN COOKE.

IN a work under the above title, the writer of this article presented a view of Pokahontas that was the result of patient and conscientious study of the old records relating to her. There is ample reason to believe that even the majority of well-informed persons have not examined these facts, considering them either unimportant or devoid of interest. A gentleman of extensive reading and critical culture, the author of some excellent books, propounded this question the other day: "Is 'My Lady Pokahontas' truth or fiction?"

The necessary reply was that both were mingled, but that the truth, that is, history, predominated; and it may interest many persons, who share the newly awakened interest in American history, to read a brief and candid statement of what I believe to be the actual truth about Pokahontas. The subject is not at all trite, as may be supposed by the general reader, though the single incident of the preservation of Captain Smith's life is a well-worn legend.

This romantic incident has naturally excited interest and sympathy, but it is not the most interesting event in the life of Pokahontas. What is apt to arouse a more intelligent curiosity is the question of her real character and her real relations with Smith, which had a very important bearing upon the history of Virginia, and therefore of the United States, as the settlement of Virginia was the first step in our history.

I will endeavor to state what are, I believe, the ascertained facts in regard to Pokahontas, leaving to one side whatever may have been written by her admirers or her critics, and, more than all, the heated controversy as to the main incident of her career. That is something quite apart from the design of this paper, which aims simply to collect the scattered statements to be found in the old writings and to present the writer's views for the reader's judgment.

Pokahontas was the daughter of Powhatan, chief of the Indian tribes in tide-water Virginia, and was born about 1595, as Smith states that at the end of 1607 she was

twelve or thirteen. He made her acquaintance as a result of his capture on the Chickahominy river, the savages taking him first as far as the Potomac and bringing him back to Powhatan's "chief place of council" on York river, not far from the present site of Yorktown. As Smith only was captured, all that then occurred rests on his own statements; and what he stated was, that the Indians were about to dash out his brains, when Pokahontas ran to him, and, taking his head in her arms, begged Powhatan to spare him. To this the Indian chief consented, and Smith remained with the Indians for the time, making toys and bead trinkets for the child. Powhatan apparently conceived the idea of making a friend of him, as he offered him a tract of land if he would come to live with him; and finally consented to his return to Jamestown.

Pokahontas having thus made her entrance upon the scene, frequently reappears from that time forward, for about two years, and, after an intermission, more prominently still. The settlers were suffering greatly for food, owing to their improvidence and the incapacity of their rulers. This fact coming to the knowledge of Pokahontas, who lived about fourteen miles distant only, she appeared at Jamestown, with a party of Indians, carrying baskets of corn, and venison probably, on their shoulders, a succor so important that a contemporary writer, who was present, declares that it preserved the lives of many about to die of famine.

Pokahontas afterwards came back every four or five days, accompanied by an escort of Indians, bringing food, it seems, as before; and Smith's subsequent statement in London was, that, without this food, and that supplied afterwards, the Virginia settlement would have been abandoned. These facts appear to be well established by the published testimony of persons then at Jamestown, and raise the interesting question, What induced the Indian girl thus persistently to aid them?

It is necessary to conclude that she as-

sisted the strangers and enemies of her own people, either from native goodness of heart, and sympathy for them in their distress and suffering, or from a personal interest in Smith. The first explanation is credible from a general view of her character; but the second is apt to suggest itself, after a consideration of all the facts, as the more probable. Many passages in the uncouth records seem to indicate that peculiar relations existed between them—on his part of gratitude, and on her own of a feeling much more romantic. One of the incidents of the time was Smith's release of some Indian thieves at her request, "for her sake only," and the expressions employed long afterwards by Pokahontas in London, seem to leave little doubt in reference to her own feelings.

The general conception of Pokahontas is so vague and undefined, that it is desirable to ascertain the precise particulars recorded of her. Her courage, tenderness and devotion have never been denied. What was she personally? From the reports of her contemporaries we derive these traits relating to her. Her face was attractive, to an extent at least, "exceeding any of the rest" of the Indian girls. As Smith adds that she had "a great spirit, *however her stature*," her figure was probably slight; beyond which there is no more testimony, except that the English courtiers declared her to be "well favored." The stiff portrait taken of her in London determines little, except that her face was pleasant. Her manners were characterized as graceful and full of dignity by the English writers, who said that she carried herself "as the daughter of a king."

Leaving for the moment the detail of events, let us consider the *personnel* of Smith. He was at this time twenty-eight, and seems, from his portrait, to have been gallant and handsome. His manners are said to have been mild and cordial, though his temper was irascible; and the circumstances of his first acquaintance with Pokahontas on the York were well calculated to excite a romantic interest in him. Nothing was more probable than that such an interest should have been avowed in Pokahontas. The question is, whether the records contain any evidence on the subject, or any statements pointing to the inference that she became romantically attached to

him. We have only the assurance that he might have married her; but setting that aside as a vague statement of uncertain meaning, there are several known incidents that carry a strong moral evidence with them.

To understand the bearing of these incidents, it is necessary to look to the dates. The capture of Smith took place in December, 1607; he was permitted to return to Jamestown in January; and it was throughout the winter and the spring of 1608 that Pokahontas proved herself the guardian angel of the starving colonists by bringing them food. Nothing is said of her relations with Smith during this period, but they must necessarily have seen a great deal of each other; and in the winter of the same year Pokahontas exhibited an unmistakable interest in his welfare.

The colony was again famine-stricken, and Smith sailed for the York, with an armed party, to trade for corn. But Powhatan was unwilling to trade, laid a trap for the destruction of the English, and nothing saved them but the courage and devotion of Pokahontas. She came alone through the darkness and cold of the winter night, to warn Smith that he was about to be attacked; and, when he offered her some coveted trinket to show his gratitude, she refused it with tears in her eyes, telling him that Powhatan would kill her if he saw her wearing it. The result of this brave act was, that Smith and his men were found ready, and the attack was not made, an attack which he afterwards stated must have ended in his destruction.

In the next year, 1609, Smith was painfully wounded, overthrown by the faction opposed to him, and he sailed in September for England, after which Pokahontas never returned of her own will to Jamestown. As she had constantly visited the English before that time, her absence after Smith's departure must have excited the surprise of the colonists; and it was only many years later that events occurred that seemed to point to the true explanation.

Three or four years afterwards, Argale, an English captain, was sent up the Chesapeake to trade for corn, and was informed by an Indian chief, whom he visited on the Potomac, that Pokahontas was with him. As nothing had been heard of her for a long

time, it was probable that she had gone thither to live, the inference seeming fair that she was no longer interested in the Jamestown settlement. Argale took her prisoner, by an act of treachery, intending to hold her as a hostage, and carried her back to Jamestown, where she was treated kindly, but kept a prisoner.

What may be called the second act in the life of Pokahontas then began ; and an event speedily occurred that seemed to falsify the theory of her love for Smith. As it was now the year 1613, she was about eighteen years of age, and a young Englishman, John Rolfe, fell in love with her. From a letter that he addressed to Sir Thomas Dale, the governor, asking his advice, there can be no doubt that Rolfe had conceived a passionate attachment for her.

The letter is published in a rare pamphlet of the time, Hamor's "Present Estate of Virginia," and is a very curious production, coming from a staid and "discreet" person, the character attributed to Rolfe. He represents himself as a prey to doubt and great trouble ; ought he to disregard the command to the Israelites not to marry "strange wives," or marry Pokahontas, and make her a Christian ? He was unable to decide on his duty, he said ; but a still more interesting question is suggested to the reader : Whether Pokahontas was at the time prepared to marry Rolfe ? If she was prepared to do so, it seems reasonable to conclude that she had quite forgotten Smith, or that the theory of her romantic attachment to him was a mistake.

As events indicated before very long, she was ready to marry Rolfe. Sir Thomas Dale sailed up York river to restore her to Powhatan in exchange for some English prisoners ; but Pokahontas clearly betrayed her indisposition to be restored. She landed among her own people, but treated them disdainfully, scarcely taking any notice of them ; and when Powhatan did not come to meet her, and made difficulties about the exchange of prisoners, the young princess tossed her head, and declared that she would go back and live "with the Englishmen who loved her."

Almost at the moment when she made this declaration, a friend of Rolfe handed his letter to Sir Thomas Dale. He read it, probably laughed heartily, and, at once

giving up his plan of laying waste the Indian territory, took Pokahontas back to Jamestown, where she was soon afterwards married to Rolfe.

These are all the known facts thus far in the life of Pokahontas, who proceeded to live "civilly and lovingly" with her husband, bore him a son, "whom she loved dearly," and, two or three years afterwards, accompanied Sir Thomas Dale to England. On the face of this array of commonplace incidents, there is nothing to support the hypothesis of any attachment to Smith beyond mere friendship ; but soon after her arrival in England, a single incident in addition again supported the theory, and gave, indeed, a very strong warranty for it.

As soon as the ship containing Pokahontas, her husband and child reached Plymouth, intelligence of her arrival was carried to London, and the event aroused general interest. It was known that she was a princess, and the first Indian that had married an Englishman. There was then a mild sensation that soon grew very strong.

Smith was the occasion of this. Hearing of the arrival of Pokahontas, he wrote an eloquent and glowing letter to the queen, described the scenes in which she had preserved his life on two different occasions, and declared that, "during the time of two or three years, she, next under God, was still instrument to preserve this colony from death, famine, and utter confusion." The letter attracted the attention of the court to Pokahontas, who speedily became the fashion, and was visited by the nobility near London ; but it was only when he was about to set sail for New England that Smith, who was in London, went to see her.

A brief account of what took place in this interview remains, and seems to support the original view of the feelings of Pokahontas. At sight of Smith she covered her face with her hands, and for a long time remained entirely silent. They then conversed with each other in private, and among other things she said : "They did tell me always you were dead, and I knew no other till I came to Plymouth."

This statement leaves no doubt at least of one fact, that some person or persons in Virginia, as far back as 1613, when she was carried a prisoner to Jamestown, had in-

formed her that Smith was dead. As she remained under that conviction until her arrival in England in 1616, she accepted the attentions of Rolfe, and married him believing Smith dead ; and her union with Rolfe, therefore, is reconcilable with her previous attachment to the soldier.

Their interview seems to have been brief, and one of passionate feeling, full of reproaches and tears on the part of Pokahontas, and apparently of a vague embarrassment on the part of Smith. It is not difficult to understand why he should have experienced some embarrassment. There is nothing to indicate that his attachment for her exceeded that of a grateful friend. She had preserved his life, and he sincerely admired her courage and devotion, but that was all. His life in Virginia had been stormy and anxious ; he had had no leisure for sentiment or romance.

But it seems that the case had been very different with the Indian girl dreaming in the York woods. There is no unanswerable testimony that such was the fact, but all the indications support the hypothesis ; and her marriage to another person does not contradict it, since she believed Smith to be dead. The interview at Brentford seems to have been their first and last in England. Smith sailed on one of his voyages, and in the en-

suing March Pokahontas died, making "a pious and godly end," just as she was about to sail for Virginia with her husband and child. It may interest some readers to know that this child became a gentleman of note, and that eminent persons in Virginia have descended from him, among them John Randolph of Roanoke.

It would be an error to suppose that the simple facts above stated are familiar to every one, since the distinguished major-general of the United States army, whom I have alluded to, a man of culture, was obliged to confess that he was ignorant, and to ask for enlightenment. If our national history possesses the importance beginning to be attached to it, as the "Historical Association" indicates and the elaborate enterprise of President Winsor demonstrates, it would be unpardonable to be indifferent to Pokahontas. The view presented of her here is personal ; but there is another view much more important, the public view. Nothing is easier to show, by the concurrent testimony of the old writers, than the fact that she preserved from destruction the first English Colony in the United States ; and that, Jamestown once abandoned, the North American continent must have fallen under the sway of Spain.

SIGNOR IO.*

BY SALVATORE FARINA.

Translated from the Italian by W. H. Allen, M. A.

I.

[From Marcantonio's Note-Book.]

HE was so tall that in order to pass under the vast arch of the Gallery of Victor Immanuel, he had to stoop and walk with his huge hands planted on his massive thighs, and it was only on reaching the rotunda that he was able to relinquish this inconvenient position. But in straightening himself up, he calculated his distances so poorly, that he thrust his immense head into the dome, breaking several lights of glass, which fell at his feet with a crash.

A little after, he started out as he had en-

**Io* is the Italian for the personal pronoun *I*, and is pronounced *Eeo*. The title of the story means literally "Mr. I."

tered, through a lateral arch. He traversed the streets rapidly, and with a few steps arrived at the ancient gates of the Porta Nuova, which he brushed out of the way without stopping. When he came to the Place Cavour, followed by a multitude to which he paid no attention, he cast a prodigious glance over the roofs of the city of Milan. He next bent his steps toward the clump of young acacias, planted by the municipality to give shade to future generations, plucked one of them daintily, and gracefully inserted it in a button-hole of his waistcoat.

Who was he ?

The personage of my dream.

But my dream was not unprofitable, and

I am pleased with it, because it is not given us always to profit by our dreams. Mine was an allegory. You recognize that sentiment that stalks solitary in its excessive grandeur, that looks no one in the face, and that puts in its button-hole the trees planted to give shade to future generations. It is called egotism.

I am no egotist. I have, perhaps, many faults that I am not aware of, but as I cannot abide a great part of my fellow-creatures, I feel that I should hate myself, were I as egotistical as they, and that would be a contradiction in terms. I have studied myself, and I wish myself well. I confess it candidly ; nay, let us go so far and say, I am a little vain ; but egotistical, no.

On the eve of taking a resolution that will change the whole current of my life, I put myself face to face with myself, and cast again a scrutinizing look into my heart, where I hope to find no shadow of remorse.

And, first of all, who am I ?

I am Marcantonio Abate, professor of philosophy in two private seminaries. I have completed my fiftieth year, been a widower fifteen years, and have, I know not where, an ungrateful daughter.

But never mind my daughter, although I don't refuse to speak of my misfortune. I have already given it much thought, and have not yet succeeded in forgetting it quite. But I have nothing to blame myself for ; I shall come to that later.

You shall see, in good time, how vilely a father was repaid, who had prepared for his daughter an enviable lot, and who, after having given her a home where, still a child, she reigned a queen, was laboring in the secret recesses of his loving heart to prepare her new pleasures—well, it is not yet time to speak.

Serafina (I gave her a beautiful name, too, but it was useless), Serafina betrayed all the hopes I had reposed in her. To-day Serafina is far away, and I am alone.

But I want nobody's sympathy. I have not professed philosophy for seventeen years without gaining some consolation from it. Science is not like human nature, and never denies its comfort at my solicitation.

When I say *alone*, I do not include in this statement the stout Anna Maria, who makes

my bed, and puts my rooms in order. She gets through these duties as quickly as possible, since I am alone ; perhaps, because seeing me silent, she believes me in trouble, and her egotism counsels her to flee the society of a melancholy disposition.

Once upon a time she, too, used to be a considerable burden. She was in the habit of slipping into the kitchen to gossip with my daughter, and probably to pick up the remains of the dinner. I make this bitter reflection every day when I see the old creature coming toward me, a little care-worn, with unsteady eyes, and her hands in her pockets. She says to me :

"I am through, and am ready to go. Have you any commands?"

I have no commands, and Anna Maria departs digging away at her pockets, first with one hand and then with the other, and in crossing the court-yard she pegs merrily along, sometimes runs.

My habits of to-day are what they were thirty years ago. I leave my bed at dawn, because I am convinced, if the facts were carefully examined, it would be discovered that early risers, provided they be not too excessively handicapped with want, hunger, and ignorance, are always found to be those that, some day or other, in the course of time, have their beds made by the sleepy-heads that rise later.

Hardly am I awake when I open my window to the light and the fresh air ; and, sad result of my misfortune, my poor wife, who used to be sleepy and querulous, but certainly happy at bottom, no longer bestirs herself with the first beams of the morning breaking into the room, and I must, therefore, kindle the flame under the coffee machine myself, which always stands ready on the little night table between the two beds. I dress myself, but in the meantime I do not lose a note of the mysterious melody the coffee-pot is singing. As the last strain dies away, I am always on the alert to quench the azure flame with a single breath.

I drink my coffee, walking up and down the room from the table to the dressing-case and *vice versa*. I lock the little alcohol stove in the cupboard, and leave the dregs to Anna Maria, who says she throws them away, but she does not do it, I assure you. I know well how much the dregs are worth ;

I know that, reboiled with a little water, they furnish a light and wholesome coffee, which my daughter used to prefer to my—but I allow myself to be deceived by poor Anna Maria, because I am aware how heavy a burden gratitude is to the heart of uncultured humanity.

While Anna Maria is putting to rights my bed and rooms, I go out to take a turn in the neighboring grove of the public gardens. At the corner of the Villa Reale I encounter an old friend of mine, a beggar by profession, but a philosopher by instinct. He sees me, and immediately draws near smiling, and salutes me.

"Good morning," he says to me, and I repeat, "Good morning." I draw myself up. I even stop to converse with him. I have never given him a penny, nor shall I ever give him a farthing; not from avarice, but from principle. He knows it, and does not think the less of me for it.

Sometimes I seat myself on a bench. He leans his back against a chestnut tree, and I question him.

"Did you get much yesterday?"

He evades the question slyly, saying that the times are wretched, and that men have no longer the fear of hell before their eyes.

"But the women?" I insist.

"The women," he answers, with a faint smile, "the women do a little, now and then, for the salvation of their souls."

One ought to hear the profound irony as he says, "for the salvation of their souls."

"But charity," I say, "the heart?"

"Charity! The heart!" he repeats, and then he unfolds to me his theory, the mature fruit of thirty years' practice. Charity, he assures me, is nothing but a secret fear of poverty. "Take away the superstitious instinct," he says to me, "and all will do like you; they will not give me a penny."

One day I asked him, "Is your business fatiguing?"

"It used to be, at first," he answered, "but not now."

When young and inexperienced, he used to run here and there like one possessed, limping, perhaps, more than was necessary. He used to lean against the wall, and get himself out of breath bemoaning his distress to the passers-by. Then, it was fatiguing; but little by little he had learned to limp

around methodically, and to judge of his patrons by their face and gait. As a consequence, he was hardly ever mistaken now.

While we are discoursing, a motley crowd is passing near us, to which he does not pay the slightest attention. Suddenly, he ignores me instead, cutting off the conversation to make his way along a narrow path, and claim his fee. I interrogate him silently. He guesses my meaning, and says, with his little smile:

"He has given me two pence. That young man looked happy. He should be in love; lovers are good patrons. I cannot explain why."

I know it well. Love is an egotistical impulse. Lovers are the most egotistical people in the world. They give alms through thoughtlessness, or, too, because they feel in themselves a kind of false grandeur, a dizziness that impels them to generous undertakings and ostentation. The least they can do to take part in the serious things of life is to give alms to a mendicant. Let us compassionate this poor, childish and decrepit humanity.

But I return to myself.

After the walk, I start for school without any particular hurry, where I am expected, but not yearned after by a score of pupils in no wise ravenous in devouring knowledge.

It is a matter understood between us that the *ens* creates the *existens*.^{*} Antagonized by this prodigious falsehood, our friendship is not very cordial, and will not last long. Hardly have I entered the schoolroom when I read in the faces of my pupils (not an exceptional occurrence) the destruction of a great hope: the hope of an influenza, or a severe fever, or any other accident you please, that might have confined me in bed during one lesson at least.

The lesson begins and ends. Now and then I question the most attentive, in order to satisfy myself that they have learned nothing. Then we part with pleasure.

I go away, carrying with me my secret aversion to the system of teaching. They look at me, open mouthed, stupefied at the

^{*}Being a teacher of philosophy, it is but natural that Marcantonio should indulge in the jargon of his profession. Readers of philosophy know, of course, that *ens* means existence as a whole, as an indefinite, unindividualized condition. *Existens*, on the other hand, means an individualized condition, which arises or results from the *ens*.

conformation of my cranium, which has been able to store up within itself such gloomy philosophy. I think, if some day it were announced *ex cathedrâ* that the *existens* has created the *ens*, because it found it convenient, what confusion! and what light it would throw on the subject! I believe the indifference of my pupils would vanish as by an enchanter's spell, and my doctrine would make way through the thickest skulls. But the system will not have it.

After the morning session, and before the afternoon school, I take a lunch at the beer-house Trenk. It is my experience that German beer, like German philosophy, should be swallowed in sips, and not in gulps, and with closed eyes. The boiled ham merits more attention. I entreat the favorable consideration of the waiter to the end that the destiny that regulates all human affairs may not cut the slices of my ham too thin, and fill my glass half with foam.

At dinner I meet a numerous company. My table companions are light-hearted, young officers, who do not find it hard to support, with a certain resignation, the taciturnity of one that eats at the same table. At their age people are so happy and thoughtless that they almost forget to be egotistical. And then, I am the shadow of the sunbeam that falls on their social board. They take me as a contrast. When they want to crack some jest, they observe me furtively, and smile at me, hoping thereby to conciliate me in advance; and, scarcely has the jest been spoken, when they break out in great peals of laughter. In compensation, they insist that I shall be the first to help myself to the soup and meats, and they show me other courtesies, in a manner a little brusque and soldierly, but very pleasant withal.

"Look at the men!" I say to myself. "These young officers would consider themselves insulted if one should stop in the street and look them over from head to foot, without any intention of giving offense; but they feel fascinated by the disdain that includes in its embrace the entire human family."

At dessert, Professor Gerolamo, my good friend and colleague, makes his appearance. Indefatigable as a retailer of slanderous gossip, he comes to take his companion at the table for a quiet stroll across the fields.

"Have you a cigar?" he says to me, as soon as we are in the open air.

"I have only one," I answer.

"I shall have to buy some," he concludes.

Yes, that is right; and yet, every day, he forgets to provide himself with cigars, and asks me for one, so that I have made it a rule to buy only one cigar before dinner.

As soon as Professor Gerolamo puts the cigar between his teeth, he begins to bite—first the cigar, and then his neighbor.

Literature furnishes him a good pretext to vent his ill humor; and he gets particularly angry with his colleague, the professor of history and geography, who has published a book on the origin (on what origin?), and has dared to write *gli* for *le*, on the very first page, and elsewhere *ci* for *vi* (and it is no typographical error), and *tavolo* for *tavola*, and *sentire* for *udire*, and I know not what other errors and horrors, since I pay him very little attention. After finishing up the professor of history and geography, he goes on to take by the collar Signor *Upsilon*, Signor *Zeta* and other gentlemen lauded by the *press* (the press? he asks himself parenthetically—four boys with university degrees), and read eagerly by the *public* (the public? What? In Italy there is no public!). Professor Gerolamo protests that these men are not writers, that literature is not that silly thing that the newspapers praise, and the public pays for, but something very different. Finally he gives it to be understood that he has read, at the most, only a dozen pages of the unfortunate *Upsilon*'s and the unhappy *Zeta*'s books, and has paid for neither of them.

If I have nothing else to think of, the tart remarks of Gerolamo divert me somewhat, but not in the way that he imagines.

"Does it not seem so to you, too?" he asks me.

"Does it seem so to me!" I say, raising my eyes to heaven; and he grows warmer still, and I amuse myself in contemplating from all sides that most curious mania of his of believing himself injured by the fame of the more celebrated recent writers, solely because he intends to write a book and make himself famous.

His way of taking an obscure writer, and placing him with great parade by the side of the most noted authors in order to prove

him worth more than all of them taken together, when he is of no account at all, seems to me ingenious; but the assurance with which, after having surrounded me with ruins, he tries, as a balm to my perturbed spirit, to lead me with gentle violence, to the ecstatic contemplation of the *idea* of the book he is going to write some day, fills me with more admiration than anything else.

He *tries*, but does not always succeed; indeed, he hardly ever succeeds, because, the most of the time, while his egotism burns to destroy libraries in order to prepare a scaffold for his nascent production, I preserve silence, and busy my thoughts elsewhere with other things.

I do not speak of myself and of my affairs any more. I tried it once, and I noticed immediately that he became absent-minded. Therefore, I hold my tongue. I enjoy his cackling as long as it amuses me, and when I am surfeited with it, I let the noise issuing from his lips go on in the open fields, to blend with the clatter the crickets are making near their holes, and the screeching of the tree-toads in the mulberry trees. However, I do not expect Professor Gerolamo to let up. He may vent his spleen as long as he wishes, but he must content himself with a nod of the head for an answer. He may accompany me in the fervor of his nocturnal demonstrations as far as the door of the house.

"Good night, my dearest friend, good night!"

He goes home, and I go to bed.
My day is brought to a close.

II.

My troubles began on the day Faustina died, the good soul!

Faustina was my wife fourteen years. She understood my inmost nature, appreciated me properly, and was considerate of my weaknesses. Speech between her and me had become almost superfluous. I would cast a look around me, and she would run to fulfill it, because she had read my thought. She would often get up before me in the morning, and did it without opening the window-blinds. She would dress herself in the dark, and go out on tip-toe, in order not to disturb the repose, of which, in her opinion, I stood so much in need. This she

used to insist on saying; and I did not contradict her, for it is a sweet thing to abandon oneself without resistance to caresses; and with certain weak and gentle natures, it is also meritorious. Faustina's affectionate nature was satisfied with it, and so was mine. That was a happy time!

During the last months of her life, my wife was given to melancholy, and she would often hide away in order to give full vent to her tears. In my presence, however, she was always smiling, and sometimes would laugh. She did not wish to bring trouble on my soul. And so she smiled on me to the last.

One morning she called me to her pillow, and told me that she would not rise that day, nor ever again. She asked me to forgive her, as if it were her fault.

"What will you do?" she said to me.

"What shall I do? See what I shall do," I answered jokingly.

And I lit the lamp of the coffee machine. "Well done!" she said sadly. And I advised her not to worry herself, not to trouble herself about anything, but to try to get well as soon as possible, in order to relieve me of embarrassment.

"How good you are!" she murmured.

She said just that. At night these four words re-echo yet in the close atmosphere of my narrow chamber. I hear them, and my heart is soothed by them, because they are the truth. Although mankind and my evil destiny may do their utmost to injure me, I am good.

Faustina died, beseeching me not to give way to my feelings, not to make myself ill, but to live for the happiness of our little one, who was then twelve years old.

The last wishes of my poor partner were sacred to me. I did everything she desired. I did not give way to my feelings, nor make myself ill; and I lived.

In the presence of Faustina's pallid and lifeless form, all this seemed to me impossible, but my will triumphed over my grievous suffering. A new life began for me, a life almost monastic in character, which lasted fifteen years, and which I have supported with fortitude, even to the present.

Serafina was a heavy burden for a lone widower. It was necessary to send her to school, and I obtained for her tuition at half price in an institution of my native province

at Bergamo. She left me weeping, and bathed my hands with her tears when she went away.

"Think of your mother," I tried to say to her. "She never used to weep. She went through life always smiling. Learn to smile on your poor deserted father, too."

Hearing this, she broke out anew, and was not to be pacified. I was compelled to leave her in the arms of the preceptress in order not to miss the mid-day train, intending to write to her as soon as I arrived in Milan; but she was more anxious about me, and four days afterwards I received, when at school, a letter of four pages, all bathed in tears. This letter came to hand after three days' delay, because it had been directed to "Abate, Professor Marcantonio."

It gave me something to think about. I found in it an abundance of romantic phrases and words, as I had anticipated. My daughter, who had always been the most timid of all creatures wearing short petticoats; my daughter, who in bidding me good night would not dare to kiss me unless encouraged to do so; my daughter, who, I know not why, used to consider me more as professor of a difficult science than as a father; she, even she, at twelve years of age, during her absence, found occasion to make use of exaggerated expressions of endearment to the author of her days!

Just like her deceased mother, she wrote: "You are good. You have a generous soul," etc.

The matter seemed to me of grave importance, and I answered her, advising her to be careful in her choice of reading, and in the use of phrases that she found printed in books. I remember I said to her:

"Write with frankness and simplicity, more with the heart than with the imagination, and above all be sincere. Learn from now on to be suspicious of high-sounding phrases, because, for the most part, they are but wind; and until you have acquired the necessary experience, it is better to avoid those expressions that are not in common use, because they may possibly be false currency."

She answered me promptly, declaring that she had understood me very well, and thanking me for my precious counsels, which, she said, were engraven on her heart. But the letter began thus: "*Adored Father.*"

The epistolary craze of my daughter was such that it became necessary to put a limit

to it, in order also not to disturb the domestic equilibrium by an excessive waste of postage stamps. I therefore delayed my answers, resolving to open my mind to Serafina during the Easter vacation.

Having promised somewhat thoughtlessly to go to accompany her home during the holidays, it was impossible to make her understand that, after mature reflection, not having things ready at the time, I could not receive her without great inconvenience. I did not wish to go as far as an explicit refusal, which would seem cruel to that little head full of pretty phrases; but it would have been agreeable if she herself, although a child, could have understood the grave perplexity occasioned by her coming. She did not comprehend it worth a pin, and in her childish egotism, she wished me at all costs to leave my occupations, pack my valise, go to the station, and then to Bergamo to get her.

When she saw me, she clapped her hands and threw herself on my neck, as her epistolary style promised, but calmed down unexpectedly. In the carriage, in the railroad coach, and at home she succeeded in deceiving me completely, by appearing to be the most judicious child in the world.

I fear, indeed, the poor little girl had a dull time of it during those Easter holidays, because I then had no experience in amusing children, and as abundant as were works on metaphysics, ethics and other departments of philosophy in my library, the *belles lettres* were but sparsely represented. Dante, Guicciardini and Machiavelli were not lacking, but Serafina was not of an age to enjoy them. The *Promessi Sposi* were there too, and my daughter set to work to re-read them through desperation. But Anna Maria was hardly in the house, when Alessandro Manzoni was thrown down at hap-hazard on the sofa, on a chair or on the table, and Serafina would run with ardor to participate in the pleasure of bed-making.

It was a good sign, and my fatherly heart noted it with great complacency. I wished to make her understand that she ought early to turn her thoughts to the development of those faculties that—

"Bravely done!" I said to her one morning, and seeing my daughter's face illuminated with joy from this explicit and unconditional approbation, I repeated more

moderately : "Bravely done ! Do the pupils in your school make the beds?"

She answered, "Yes," and that every morning there was a silent rivalry to see who made them quickest and best. Then I began :

"See here, my child, reading is a good thing. I have always recommended it to you, and recommend it to you still ; but it is necessary to choose the right kind of literature, and to know how to digest what you read ; otherwise, every book is a danger. Then, after the intellectual faculties, children ought early to care for the development of those other faculties that—"

With the "that" the period halted, and I corrected myself :

"Of those qualities, by means of which—"

But in this shape the sentence was not making headway either, when Serafina broke in.

"By means of which beds are made," she said, simply, and what she said was quite true.

"By means of which beds are made," I repeated ; "the very same faculties in virtue

of which people become good housekeepers, that is to say, good daughters, good wives and good mothers."

"Papa," exclaimed Serafina, with a flash of that enthusiasm that she owed to her reading, "papa, I ought to stay with you to make the beds and take care of the house. Instead of going away to dine at the restaurant, we will dine together here. Anna Maria can do the cooking, and I will help her. In school I learned to cook eggs in the shell, and I will learn the rest."

I kissed my daughter on the forehead to thank her, but she repeated :

"Will you ?"

"The time has not yet come," I said.

"You are only twelve years old."

"And a half—"

"You ought to complete, at the very least, your elementary studies. But I promise that when you have grown a little bigger, I will not refuse you this comfort, and you shall take the place of your poor mother."

What silly fancy put it into my head to bring the dead into the conversation ? Here Serafina is weeping like a fountain.

[*To be continued.*]

NINETY DEGREES.

WILLIAM C. RICHARDS.

No doubt it is glorious
For jolly old Boreas,
Up yon, in his palace of snow,
To laugh, while we fry,
Down here in July,
But winter is coming, I trow.

With our thumb at our nose,
While the anthracite glows,
We'll wink with our sinister eye ;
And bid him remember,
We laugh in December,
As he did in sultry July.

He'll want to beg coal of us ;
But no, not a soul of us
Will give him an ounce from our bin ;
And then, when he lingers,
And blows his cold fingers,
And howls at our doors to get in :



A MONTANA COWBOY.

THE COWBOYS OF THE NORTHWEST.

BY WILLIAM T. HORNADAY.

Author of "Two Years in a Jungle."

IT is too bad that I cannot introduce them in a manner befitting their character. Some of them should suddenly appear on the crest of a treeless ridge, mounted and fully equipped with lariat, "shaps," "slicker," and "six-shooter," and dash past you like a whirlwind, with their ponies on "a dead run." It was really thus that we first saw a trio of cowboys on their native heath, as our heavily-loaded, six-mule team toiled slowly northward from Miles City, Montana, bound for what was once a famous buffalo range.

The eastern idea of a cowboy is, that he is a man who shoots, who "runs" frontier towns now and then, and holds life cheap; who steals cattle for his employer occasionally, bulldozes inoffensive people, is a bold, bad man, and a "holy terror" at all times. Without doubt, the Texas cowboys have done a good deal toward earning this reputa-

tion; but whether they are justly entitled to all the evil notoriety they have acquired, I cannot undertake to say.

The cowboys of the Northwest, however, are a different set, and the object of this sketch is to do them justice on the one hand, and on the other to represent their life precisely as it is, stripped of the romance that has been falsely ascribed to it. I have been assured by veteran cowboys that hosts of young men have been lured to the west by fancy pictures of riches and romance, who now look back upon their coming as the mistake of a life-time.

I shall always remember with real pity one young fellow that had but lately left a good position in a Chicago store at \$20 per week, and gone West to be a cowboy, to work sixteen hours a day in all kinds of weather, and without any of the comforts of life, at \$30 per month. His disappointment was as

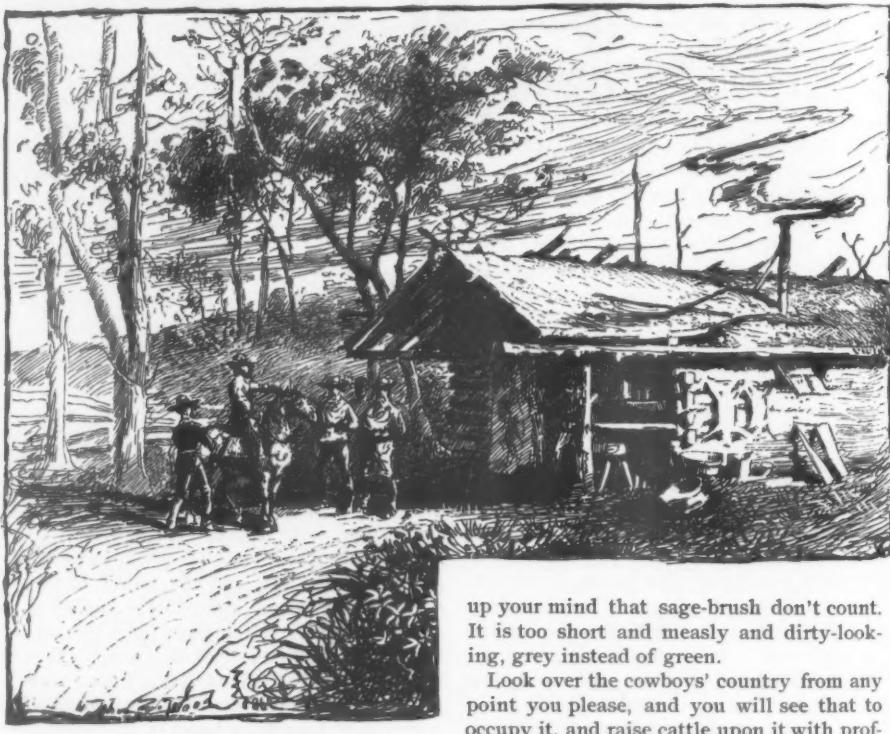
bitter as gall, but he had to swallow it, and earn his living.

The Northwestern cattle range, so far as it is occupied up to date, lies in southeastern Montana, northeastern Wyoming, and western Dakota. Approximately it may be marked out on the map by boundary lines drawn as follows : Along the Missouri river eastward from Fort Benton to the mouth of the Little Missouri in Dakota ; thence south to Deadwood ; thence westward to the northeast corner of the Yellowstone Park, and from that point up to Fort Benton.

Physically, the cattle country presents but

streams, and although they are a succession of rolling hills and ridges, the undulations are so gentle that a wagon can be driven across them in any given direction.

Like the bad lands, the divides are absolutely treeless ; but until you have ridden day after day, week in and week out, without finding a single tree or even a bush for your weary eyes to rest upon, you cannot have the faintest idea of the monotony, the loneliness, the desolation, and the yearning for shade and green leaves that are crowded into that little word. To be sure, there is sage-brush, but you very soon make



A RANCH-HOUSE OR SHACK.

three features : bad lands, prairie divides, and river bottoms, although in area the latter are comparatively insignificant. The bad lands are immense areas of semi-mountainous country, rugged, broken and wild-looking in the extreme, fitted for no purpose whatever save grazing, and only a limited amount of that. The divides are really the water-sheds between the larger

up your mind that sage-brush don't count. It is too short and measly and dirty-looking, grey instead of green.

Look over the cowboys' country from any point you please, and you will see that to occupy it, and raise cattle upon it with profit, means an endless round of long, wearisome rides, with many a fall, thirst, hunger, and extremes of heat and cold. It means weeks spent on the ground without any shelter, and months in lonesome dug-outs, far from the ranch, and far from all the little comforts of body and mind that make life agreeable.

There was not a little pathos, and much eloquence, in the stray memorandum I found

on the title-page of a well-worn copy of Miss Braddon's "Hostages to Fortune," in the first dug-out I came across in the buffalo country. There was nobody at home, but I went in all the same. This was the entry, written in pencil, in handwriting any book-keeper might well be proud of:

"May 6th.—Arrived here. Lonesome as —, but a good supper. Buffalo hump and onions."

It is no disgrace to admit that until actually getting among the Montana cowboys, and getting acquainted with them, I was under the impression that they were not agreeable men to meet. So far as I have seen, no one has ever done them justice in print. The first one I met in the field and got acquainted with was a very bright fellow, named Irwin Boyd, and we met, quite by accident, in this wise:

One hot afternoon, as we were approaching Big Dry Creek, a cowboy suddenly rode in sight on the crest of a ridge, and came down the slope toward us at a swinging gallop. He sat as erect as a bronze statue, and had he been lashed to his horse like another Mazeppa he could not have sat more perfectly motionless in his saddle. Instinctively, we straightened up our tired shoulders, and sat erect also. Evidently he wanted to speak to us. So we rode forward

to meet him, wondering the while whether his manner would be agreeable or irritating.

After we had civilly exchanged how-do-you-dos, he inquired whether we had seen any horses since morning. He had lost some, and up to that time, two o'clock, had ridden about twenty-five miles in search of them. No, we had not seen any horses. So we fell to asking questions about trails, creeks, and water-holes. We were getting a deal of information, when he suddenly exclaimed :

"Looky here, fellers! The best thing you can do is to pull on to our ranch, and put up for a while. It's only twelve miles from here. Take the trail that turns off to the left, about three miles ahead. You won't find anybody at home—the boys are all off on the round-up, you know—but just go right in, and make yourselves at home."

"Isn't the door locked?"

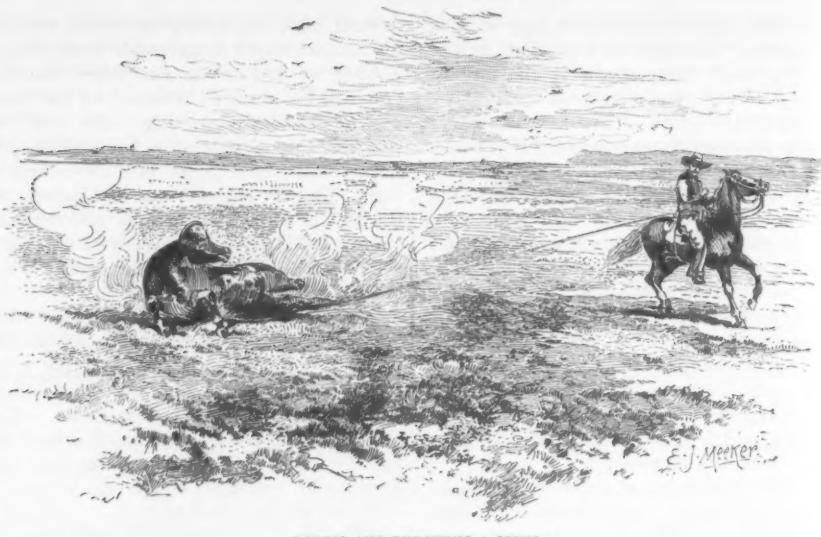
"Thunder, no! We never lock doors in this country. Somebody might come along hungry, and want to get in to get some grub, or stay all night. If a cowboy wanted to get in, and found the door locked, he'd just simply break it down."

"Aren't you afraid of thieves?"

"Oh, no; nothing is ever stolen. A man's upon his honor, you know; and,



A DUG-OUT IN THE BAD LANDS.



ROPING AND THROWING A STEER.

besides, if a feller'd ever really steal anything out of a shack, the country'd soon be too hot to hold him. Anybody that comes to a shack hungry is expected to go in and get a square meal, and stay all night if he wants to."

"Isn't that privilege often abused?"

"No, hardly ever. Say, you'll find a cow up at the ranch, and you can milk her if you want to. There are plenty of eggs about the stable; if you want 'em, go for 'em. Just make yourselves at home, and stay as long as you like. I'll be glad to have yer company."

A few more remarks were exchanged, and then our cowboy gathered up his reins, and said :

"Well, I've got to finish my circuit, twenty miles more, I reckon; so I must be moving. So long. I'll see you at the ranch about sundown."

And flinging the last remark over his shoulder at us as his pony galloped rapidly away, a moment later he rode over a ridge and disappeared.

In personal appearance there is very little about a cowboy that is distinctive or picturesque. The universal broad-brimmed hat is common enough amongst plainsmen generally, but for some occult reason the cowboys have a fancy for broad and heavy hat-bands of stamped leather. They wear

shirts of grey flannel, and coats and trousers of no particular color or quality. About half of them wear capacious leather breeches, like overgrown leggings, called "shaps," which, with the yellow oilskin coat or "slicker," makes a complete protection against rain.

For foot gear they invariably wear high boots, with very high heels, and the trousers are always tucked in. The high heels are for a special purpose; or, to put it in the current scientific jargon, this highly specialized form of the heel has been developed by the requirements of the animal for some mechanical means to prevent the slipping of the foot through the aperture of the stirrup. To meet this want, the prolonged heel has been produced by the slow process of natural selection and accretion, and the struggle of the animal to harmonize with its environment.

A cowboy's saddle is a wonder to behold, and to the pony that gets under it, it is no light matter. A good, healthy stock-saddle weighs from thirty-five to forty-five pounds, and costs from forty to one hundred dollars. In spite of this plethora of stamped leather, and its great breadth of beam amidships, it has its good points. It is so strongly built that by hitching a rope to its pommel, the rider can throw the heaviest steer, or pull a wagon out of a mud-hole, or lead the most

disinterested mule that ever lived. But there is one thing against them. They are so wide that they make the cowboys bow-legged. I saw one fellow whose legs were bowed so far apart when he stood on the ground that I could have thrown a cat between them, with perfect safety—to the cat. When he walked he rolled like a genuine jack-tar on shore.

Except when in town, and very often when there, every cowboy carries a six-chambered, 45-calibre revolver, and a belt full of cartridges. These weapons are carried more for the purpose of killing game than for protection, and in time, when the game is exter-

minated, I predict that the six-shooter will go quite out of fashion, and be laid upon the shelf. I never saw a cowboy carry a knife other than a common pocket-knife, nor more than one revolver.

His jingling spurs, which, though large and fierce-looking, are not cruel, and the plaited riding whip or "quirt," of soft leather, which hangs from the wrist, completes the cowboy's personal outfit. The *quirt* makes a terrifying sound when it sweeps through the air, and strikes a horse, but the thong is so soft that it very rarely raises a welt, and does not hurt half so much as it appears.

Like the Argonauts of '49, the cowboys hail from all parts of the East, West and Southwest, no one section being more strongly represented than the others, unless it be the West. In a company of a dozen cowboys whose nativity I asked, only two were from the same state, Missouri. There was one man from Maine, another from Washington Territory, others from Texas, Nebraska, Dakota, Wisconsin, Arkansas, Illinois, and so on.

As might be expected, cowboys are almost without exception young men under thirty. Instead of being long-haired and long-bearded ruffians, with respect for few and politeness for none, and likely to break out



GRUB-WAGON—BREAKFAST.

at any moment in dangerous and unlawful pastimes, they are, in reality, clean-shaved, quiet-mannered fellows, extremely civil and very obliging. I never saw elsewhere in this country a set of men that were so careful in the avoidance of sarcasm and smart sayings likely to give offense. They are severely matter-of-fact in everything, and very little given to joking. Indeed, where every man carries a six-shooter, jokes are not safe things to handle, unless they are of mighty small calibre.

Any joke, no matter how old and rusty, if pointed at a cowboy, is liable to go off, and kill the very man that "didn't know it was loaded." The man that treats a cowboy to

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Like the Argonauts of '49, the cowboys

too much and too bitter irony is in danger of having it replied to in a very painful, shooting-irony way, so to speak. An active, high-spirited revolver is certainly a very effective discourager of jokes.

I heard of one cowboy that had once met with some slight difficulty in Texas, for which reason his chums at the ranch undertook to christen him anew. They began to call him Texas. One day he said, politely but seriously :

"Boys, I don't want you to call me Texas any more. I don't like it."

For those that had cut their eye-teeth this was enough. But in the company was one wild and venturesome tenderfoot who lacked experience. The next day as they sat at the dinner-table, he addressed the man from the South, purposely :

"I say, Texas, have you ever—"

"Looky here, you son of a gun, if you ever call me that again I'll shoot you!" said the other, turning fiercely toward him, and

pointing with a long forefinger very suggestive of a revolver, straight at the head of the offender.

The tenderfoot was so badly scared that he nearly fell off the bench, and it was months before he dared mention the name of the Lone Star state, without first looking around to see whether the man that was not Texas was within earshot.

There is one trait of character common to all cowboys, and for which they are greatly admired. It is their generosity and faithfulness to one another in times of trouble. If one gets dangerously sick, or meets with a serious accident, all the others rally around him, friends and strangers alike, to do whatever is needful. If he needs to go to a hospital, or to the Hot Springs, a purse is made up, and he is sent forthwith. It is a common thing for a cowboy working for \$40 per month to give \$10, toward a purse for a man he never heard of until asked to give for his benefit. I have heard that it is



BRANDING A CALF.

not at all uncommon for \$500 to be contributed, in a few days' time for the benefit of one man only. When a cowboy is in trouble, if he is a square man, there is nothing too good for him.

There is one thing about the social relations of the cowboys that to a stranger is very amusing, and that is, their ignorance of one another's names. Unless a "cow-puncher," as they almost invariably call themselves in a half-contemptuous way, is noted as being a particularly expert "roper," or else has killed a man, he is known only by his first name, and not always then. A crowd is always addressed as "fellers," and a single individual as "say," unless his first name is known. I once asked a cowboy to tell me the surname of his partner, "Charlie." He studied a moment, and finally said: "Blamed if I know what his last name is, anyhow."

And yet they were alone together at a dug-out, and had been companions for a month or more.

Like sailors of the old school, cowboys seldom get a chance to spend any money, and when they do they lose their heads, and fling it away by the handful. Their custom is to work a year or two, soberly and steadily, away off out of reach of temptation, and when finally paid off they go at once to the nearest large town for a lark. If the amount to be spent is \$300, and the owner of it is indolent, he usually gets rid of it all in about three days.

It is the same old story every time—cards, whiskey and women. Sometimes when the whiskey is particularly bad, the "cow-puncher" goes on a regular "tear," and rides his horse into saloons and other places that no horse that values his reputation would ever enter of his own accord; or the festive raider shoots out a few lights, pounds a friend over the head with his "six-shooter," and does various other eccentric things that no man in his senses would find any pleasure in. But it is soon over. As soon as the last dollar of his wages has been successfully "blowed in," to borrow his own expression, he fetches up short, with a tremendous jerk, like a steer at the end of his own lariat. In true sailor fashion, he at once turns his face toward the grassy billows of his prairie ocean, and ships for another long cruise.

A natural result of low wages and sad improvidence, cowboys are nearly always poor and without any property, save their saddles and six-shooters. The ponies they ride are always the property of the "outfit" they are working for. A very few have saved money, and bought cattle and horses, until by slow degrees they have become independent. But after all, how can a man be expected to save money enough for a start in life when he gets only \$40 or \$50 per month, and is obliged to lie idle nearly half the year at that.

The worst of it is, there is not steady employment. When the spring round-up is over, the most of the men engaged in it are discharged until the fall round-up, and after that they are again idle during the winter. To be sure their semi-annual employer gives them their "grub" between seasons, free of charge, in order to hold them on his ranch; but that is not money.

The saddle is the true home of the cowboy, but he has, in addition to this and the bare prairie, two other stopping places, the ranch-house or "shack" and the dug-out. The ranch-house is usually built either of stone or cottonwood logs, or both together, with mud for filling, and a dirt roof six inches thick. It contains bunks, a long table and benches, a cook-stove and a heating stove. Usually it is a half dug-out, set into the side of a steep bank. The dug-out proper is simply a square room dug down into the earth, or into a steep bank. In the former case it is roofed over with dirt thrown on cottonwood poles, and steps are dug leading down to it. It contains a rusty old stove, a crazy table of rough boards, a bunk made of poles, and two or three stools made of boards nailed together in a rude fashion. It is very good fun to live in, or rather *at*, a dug-out for a few nights in fine weather; but to make it a home for months in disagreeable weather, is quite another thing. Still, I remember the time when getting to a dug-out seemed like the next best thing to getting home. The ranch-house is really a very comfortable place, even when plastered with mud inside and out. But the trouble is, the cowboys are obliged to be away from it at the very time its comforts would be most enjoyed.

"But what is the work of the cowboy?" "Aye, there's the rub." The uninitiated

tenderfoot thinks complacently that "there is nothing to do but to ride on horseback." True enough, and by the same token the Irish laborer declared to his emigrant brother, "Shore Pat, an' ye'll git well paid here for doin' nothin' atahl, so you will. All ye'll heve to do'll be to carry brick up a laddher to the top of a foor-story bildin', and a mahn up there does *ahl the work*."

When a tenderfoot is lured to a ranch, he is usually put at herding a lot of cattle, or else sent to the horse camp to assist the "horse-wrangler" in herding and taking care of the horses. His pay is from \$20 to \$30 per month, and it may be months from the beginning of his work before he even sees the ranch-house. Of course he learns the business as fast as he can, but he is not a full-fledged cowboy until he can ride through all sorts of country without getting lost, ride without getting worn out, ride a plunging bucker without coming to grief, ride over the roughest kind of ground faster than the wildest steer can run, and at the same time be able to "rope," throw down and tie, single-handed, the wildest steer in the herd, in the presence of jeering rivals.

Of course the round-up is the great business of the year. The whole cattle country is divided up into districts (there are eighteen in the Northwest), and every foot of it must be looked over. The rivers and creeks are taken as base lines, and all operations are planned accordingly. The starting point of each division is stated, together with its course, the point where it "splits," perhaps, and also the place where it finishes.

Two weeks before the date fixed for the starting of the round-up, the clans begin to gather. Ranchmen short of hands look up new men, and hands out of places look out for employment. The "grub-wagon" is loaded with the provisions and cooking utensils, the big, long-handled branding-irons, the bedding, spare clothing, and other extras are all put in, and the cook-driver starts with it to the rendezvous, perhaps seventy-five miles away. The cowboys accompany the wagon usually, and the horse-wrangler, with his big herd of ponies, forms the rear guard of the procession. The men from all the ranches in a certain district camp near the starting point until the date of the commencement rolls around (May 20th this year), and then the trouble begins.

On a round-up, every day contains from sixteen to twenty working hours. The cook gets up at three o'clock, and by half-past three or four breakfast is ready. The men are all tired and sleeping, having been in the saddle all the previous day, and, perhaps half the night, guarding the cattle. In such condition, a man seldom has any appetite, but knowing that he can get nothing more until evening he forces down a ration of beef, or fat bacon, bad bread, and potatoes, and drinks a pint or two of fearfully strong, black coffee, made with alkali water, and without milk, of course. Then the herd of ponies is driven up, the boys get on those that have been kept picketed over night, and at the herd they go with their lassos to catch fresh ponies for the day's work.

A little later everybody is mounted and ready, and the foreman of the round-up gives his orders. He names the locality that is to be the next rendezvous, divides his field force, and tells each where to go. The cook-teamster is left to his fate. He must pack up his wagon, hitch up his team, and get to the rendezvous, perhaps fifteen miles ahead, in time to get dinner ready for the boys. The chances are, there is no trail whatever, he has never been over the ground, and the bad lands are almost impassable with a wagon; but no matter, he has got to get there somehow, no matter how, by three or four o'clock, to meet the wants of a crowd of hungry and cross "cow-punchers."

The cowboys separate, and sweep forward in a long skirmish line, ten miles long perhaps, searching all the ravines, the groups of buttes and the smaller divides as they go. Whoever finds cattle must drive them all to the rendezvous. No matter how wild they are, no matter how persistently they run in the wrong direction, they must be headed off, and compelled to go straight forward with the round-up. The ground may be all hills and hollows, or an alkali flat full of treacherous bogs, covered with a hard-looking crust, ready to deceive and engulf the wariest rider in a twinkling. It may be a prairie-dog town of two hundred acres in extent, thickly set with holes just big enough for a horse to step a leg in clear up to the knee, and break it instantly, to say nothing of the rider's neck or collar-bone. No matter what ground the herd leads over, nor how many steep ravines it plunges

down, the cowboy must outrun it, and keep it under control, even if every leap of his horse puts his life in jeopardy.

It may be sunset before the last bunch of cattle reaches the camp, and there may be a herd of three thousand head there already, to be held for the "cutting-out" on the morrow, or a few days later. The next thing is to guard the immense herd all night to prevent it from scattering, or, worse still, a general stampede, which would be a calamity of the first magnitude.

It is this night work that tries a cowboy's soul. The men are divided up into watches of from two to four hours each, and fresh ponies are caught. It is the duty of the men on watch to ride around the herd constantly on a trot, or a fast walk, no matter how dark it is or how hard it rains, and if any cattle attempt to break away they must be pursued and brought back.

It seems to me that a man has no idea of dangerous work until he is called upon to ride at full gallop after wild cattle, in pitchy darkness, over ground that is fearfully rough, full of holes and gullies, or overgrown with sage-brush thick enough to throw the strongest horse that ever lived.

But of all things the cowboys dread, the stampede of a herd at night stands foremost. Very often in a thunder storm the vivid flashes of lightning and deafening peals of thunder completely terrify the cattle, and they start to run in a body. Once under way, they dash madly along as if pursued and goaded on by a legion of cowboy devils, and unless got under control they are almost certain to run for hours in a tolerably straight line, and finally to scatter in every direction.

It is then that the cowboy shows what stuff he is made of. The situation calls for a dashing, swearing, tearing, dare-devil, who does not stop to think of broken bones, and who would chase a steer into Dante's Inferno rather than be outdone by him. Married men could never control a stampede, for they would think too often of their wives and children.

The thing to be done is to outrun the herd, neck or nothing, get in front of it, and compel the leaders to swerve constantly in one direction. If this is done, the cattle will run in a circle instead of in a straight line, and so not run quite out of the range. To stop a stamped herd is quite out of the

question, for some time at least; it would be about as easy to stop an express train. But it can be outrun, barring accidents. At such times, cowboys have told me, they see nothing save by the flashes of lightning, and depend almost wholly upon the sense and activity of their ponies.

When a tract of country is cleared of cattle, and a big herd collected, the next business is "cutting-out" and branding. "Cutting-out" is simply sorting the cattle, and getting the animals that are similarly branded in separate herds.

There are enough cowboys to surround a herd completely and hold it, while others ride in amongst the cattle, single out the ones marked with a certain brand, and drive them out to the "cut-out" where they belong. This, too, is dangerous work. If you doubt it, just get on a small pony, and force your way to the center of a crowded herd of wild, long-horned cattle, so dangerous to pedestrians that one dares not venture near them unless protected by a horseman.

Even after a steer has been forced out of a herd, he wants to go everywhere save to the cut-out where he belongs, and it often ends in a struggle between man and beast as to who shall be "boss." The steer runs, and the swearing cowboy chases him hither and thither, the trained pony keeping his eye on the refractory animal, and following him in all his windings and doublings as persistently as his own shadow.

Ponies sometimes watch the steer so closely that they forget to watch their ground, and run into holes or half-hidden gullies with disastrous effects. In this way I once saw a pony plunge with both forelegs nearly up to the shoulders in a ditch-like gully, partly concealed by sage-brush. Both horse and rider turned almost a complete summersault. The cowboy fell on his head, and was nearly killed, but to the surprise of everybody, the pony escaped without a broken leg.

As might be expected, cowboys meet with a great many accidents, and you will find very few old hands that have not had from one to three bones broken. One of those I met told me that, with his leg broken halfway below the knee, and one end of the bone protruding through the flesh, he had to ride sixty miles on horseback to get to a doctor.

After the cutting-out comes the branding

of the calves. One by one they are caught with a lasso, thrown down and held by two men, while the third claps upon it the hot branding-irons (it must have the same brand as its mother, of course), and a fourth marks its ears. The little suffering victim bawls lustily during the commission of these outrages, and it often happens that an infuriated mother rushes to the rescue of her offspring, only to have her own horns knocked off on the spot in self-defense. When the cutting-out is over, each herd is taken in charge by its owner's men, who proceed to "throw it over," or in other words, drive it to its own range, and turn it loose. That done, the men return at once to the round-up, and go on as before for six weeks perhaps, until the whole country is gone over.

Such is the life of a cowboy, full of hardships, dangers, and privations. His country is big and barren, his journeys are always long, and the riding he does is so hard on horse flesh that every cowboy requires from five to eight ponies for use in rotation, in order always to have a horse under him that can do the work absolutely required. His country is inhospitable to the last degree, possessing the peculiar faculty of being always too hot or too cold, too wet or too dry. In winter the mercury sinks to 40° below zero, but now, this very day, a dispatch from Fort Keogh announces that it stands at 120° in the shade.

In rainy weather the cowboy has to drink water that is thick with yellow mud, and in dry weather the water in the water-holes is clear enough, but it is often so full of alkali that even a horse cannot drink it. Sometimes the only water to be had is so much like lye, that in order to drink it at all without the most distressing cramps afterwards, it is necessary to put in Jamaica ginger until it burns the throat like liquid fire. But there are exceptions to all rules, and occasionally the water supply is quite satisfactory.

It is when a cowboy is obliged to come down to cooking for himself that I pity him most profoundly. A great many of them cook very well for men that do not have much to cook, and for a few days you can get along with their fare quite satisfactorily. But

then, think of living on it year in and year out. I only wish I had space enough for a description of a cowboy dinner I once saw cooked, and helped to eat also.

There is one other thing to be charged against the cowboy's country, and that is, the danger of getting lost in it. Cowboys frequently get lost in the bad lands, where the landmarks are all alike, and especially in the winter when the snow is on the ground. On the last round-up I heard of a whole "outfit" getting lost. Out of the sixty-five men that started out in the morning, only four got back to camp that day, and some spent the night under their saddle-blankets on a river sixty miles away.

The cowboys of the Northwest are a brave, hardy, earnest, and, so far as I saw, honest set of men. They work harder for what they get than any set of men I know, sailors not excepted, and I am told that the average period of a man's career in the stock-saddle is less than five years.

In time, when the grangers occupy the best parts of the cattle country, they will be crowded out to a great extent, and cease to be the prominent feature of the West that they now are. If we are ever involved in another war, they will make the finest cavalrymen the sun ever shone upon.

There is one thing about the cowboys that troubles me. They do not get enough wages. In consideration of the work they do, they ought to get about \$200 a month instead of \$40. No wonder they are all discouraged, and all say, confidentially :

"I'm sick of cow-punchin', and I'm going to quit it forever this fall."

For my part, fond as I am of the saddle and out-door life, I would not be a cowboy for less wages than \$5,000 a year, cash in advance. Even at that rate, I would not bind myself to work longer than six months, and the chances are, that at the end of an engagement, I would still feel I had almost given my services away. And yet, after a month in the saddle, some cowboys did me the honor to say admiringly, when introduced:

"Well, if I hadn't known ye, I couldn't have told ye from one of us!"

MAUMER'S CURE FOR COWARDICE.

BY MARY ROSE FLOYD.

IT was Sunday at the Bellevue plantation—a hot, breezeless Sunday. Far away to the right stretched the broad corn-fields, each vivid green stalk erect and motionless. Through the oaks could be seen the un-ruffled waters of St. Andrew's Sound, reflecting the intense blue of the summer sky.

Everything betokened the Sabbath. The bird-notes were few and faint, the fowls rested lazily under the shade of the Cape Jasmine bushes, while the dogs slept undisturbed in the shadow of the kitchen. An intense Sabbath calm seemed to brood over the old house; and I, a restless little mortal, counted the slow hours, and longed for the coming of the morrow, when, untrammeled by a stiff, white dress, I could run and romp to my heart's content.

And yet, alas! My romping and playing were generally by myself, for I was the only young thing in the old house, and my grandmother, while she deplored my loneliness, objected to my spending much of my time with the little negroes.

From where I sat, I could now and then hear the shrill screams and loud laughter of my little playmates, and oh! how I longed to be one of them. If I could only slip off unnoticed, I would join that dusky, merry band.

Rising noiselessly, I made my way to the parlor, and peeped in. There sat my grandmother, intent on her prayer-book. She would be thus employed for an hour, at least; for she read slowly and I well knew the Litany would not be mastered in a hurry. Where was maumer? And Maum Betty, where was she? If I could escape the vigilance of these two, I should be safe. I passed through the silent rooms, but neither nurse nor housekeeper could I see.

So far, so good. With my blue sun-bonnet under my arm, I walked stealthily to the back piazza. A faint-breeze had sprung up, and the corn stalks rustled pleasantly, while a rooster crowed merrily,

"Perhaps he's forgot it's Sunday," thought I; "at any rate I am going to try to forget it. I'm going to get Ansel and

Cylla and the others, and we'll catch crabs, and—"

The rest of my programme was nipped in the bud, for close beside me sounded the voices of Maum Betty and maumer. They were talking earnestly and in low tones. From where I stood I could see them distinctly, and hear, too, a conversation which was evidently not intended for my ears.

Maumer, a small mulatto woman, was dressed in the cast-off clothes of some of my aunts, and sat upright in a low rocker, her brown hands crossed over her white muslin apron. Large hoops of gold ornamented her ears, while a kerchief of brilliant plaids was arranged above her head in stiff folds, resembling a tall cap. Her companion was stout, as black as ebony, and was arrayed in a dress of bright-flowered calico. She, too, wore a kerchief on her head, only the structure was less elaborate than maumer's. She was seated on an inverted box, and her usually smiling face was grave, while her voice was scarcely recognizable in its solemnity.

"Well, after all, aunty, I s'pose she's better off. Deat's got ter come some day; so w'at's de use, aunty, er tryin' ter wrastle wid w'at we can't handle?"

"Dere's no use, Betty," sighed maumer. "Only it's a sad t'ing ter hab de breat' leabe de body widow a soul ter ax yo' if yo' lamp is trimmed an' burnin', or ter see wedder oona wants a drink er col' water, or a mowt'ful er wittles. I tell yo' hit's a sad t'ing."

"Oh! de boy was dey. He was de one w'at foched de news. He say, Aunt Sukey went off sorter easy-like; dat befo' e had time ter mek known w'at was gwine ter happen, she done dead!"

"Po' soul."

"Yes, aunty, yo' may well say 'po soul.' I hates ter t'ink wey de ol' soul is gone. She had no use fur de meetin'-house, nor de preacher, nudder; an' as to de speritables, I neber hearn Aunt Sukey so much as cheep one in all my life."

Maum Betty smiled as she spoke. Then,

noticing the look of disapproval on the face of her listener, she hastened to excuse her uncalled-for levity.

"I ain't der laugh at po' Aunt Sukey, aunty; in co'se not. But ebery time I t'ink er de way Cyrus tol' Br'er John, I's 'bleeged ter smile. Bout fust cock-crow I hear rap, rap at de back do'. Says I, 'Ol' man, wake up! Dere's somebody at de t'reshol' of de back do'.' 'Who's out dey?' axes my ol' man. 'Der me,' says de pusson outside. 'Dat's Cyrus' wooice, enty?' 'Yes, sah. I's cum ter tell oona, mammy done dead.' 'W'at kill um,' says John, grabbin' fur he shoes. 'Deat' kill um,' Cyrus mek answer. 'W'at time he dead, boy?' 'Nyong flood.' 'Well,' say John, 'wey oona t'ink say he gone?' 'I t'ink say 'e gone ter to'ment.'"

"Oh! Betty," interrupted maumer. "I ain't er mek game er Aunt Sukey, aunty. Dis is jes' w'at de boy say. John ax 'um w'at mek e' t'ink Aunt Sukey gone ter de bad place, an' e' mek answer, 'cause I s'hun t'ief befo' 'e dead.'"

Maum Betty hid an approaching smile in the corner of her check apron. For a minute there was silence, and I was about moving quietly away, when maumer's voice was heard :

"And yo' t'ink, Betty, hit 'ud be a good t'ing ter carry de chile dey?"

"Oh! yes, aunty," replied Maum Betty with alacrity. "Yo' see hit's a bad t'ing fur de chile ter grow up wid dese cowardly feelin's. She aint got no mudder, 'ceptin' yo', an' hit's yo' duty ter bring 'er up in de right way befo' tribulation obertakes 'er."

"Yes," assented maumer, but her voice was low and her face disturbed.

"Don't yo' get onres'less, aunty. Hit ain't er gwine ter hu't 'er one grain. Ef I t'ought dat hit 'ud, I'd die fust. She's like my own flesh an' blood, Betty. W'en po' Miss Ma'tha dead, de po' baby was put in my a'ms, and 'pears like I could see dose dyin' eyes look at me, as much as ter say, 'Maumer, yo' loved me; love my chile,' an' God knows, I's loved de po' pet same as dough she was my own," she said, breaking into sobs.

"We all loves de chile," said Maum Betty, soothingly, "an' wouldn't axwise yo' ter do one t'ing dat 'ud ha'm her; but it won't hu't de chile, an' cause yo' lub her, yo's got

ter do yo' duty by 'er; an' anuder t'ing, aunty, dey aint neber been a coward in de gen'al's fambly. W'y, ol' mass'a'd stretch 'e self in 'e grabe, if 'e t'ought—!"

"I'll do it, Betty," interrupted maumer, hurriedly, but resolutely. "W'at time's it?"

"Plenty er time. 'Taint eleben yet."

Seeing the two women rise, I retreated on tip-toe, and returned to my former place on the piazza,

Of whom were they speaking? Miss Martha's child! Why, I was the child left to maumer's care. My young mother died when I was only three weeks old. They certainly meant me; and then my thoughts wandered off to Maum Sukey. They said she was dead, and they spoke as though she was a sinner. Only last week, I had seen the old African sitting in her cabin door—an old, old woman, with small fierce eyes, and deep tattoo marks on her thin temples and hollow cheeks. Her clothing consisted of dirty rags, for she would neither bathe nor dress herself, unless the negro women went to her house and performed those offices for her.

Poor old Maum Sukey! I wish I had carried her some cakes and some bread; but my kind intentions had come too late. Day after day she sat alone, her dim eyes resting on the little patch of vegetables planted by her grandson. The negroes never went near the cabin, except to assist her in changing her clothing. Years ago, she had put spells on some of them, they said, so they preferred to keep away.

"My chile, come here. W'ey is yo'?"

And maumer appeared in the doorway with my sun-bonnet and an umbrella. I forgot all about Maum Sukey, and rose joyfully, for I knew there was the prospect of a walk. "De ol' lady say yo' kin go wid me ter Sister Rhina's house," said maumer, as she tied my bonnet under my chin.

"Does yo' wan' ter go wid maumer?"

"Yes," I cried, "just try me."

"Is yo' sho yo' wan' ter go?" persisted my nurse.

"I do really and truly want to go," said I, emphatically.

Thus assured, she took my hand, and together we sallied forth. Through the rows of tasseling corn, under the drooping branches of a cluster of Pride-of-India trees, we went

slowly, for the breeze had died away, and it was fearfully warm. Sometimes my feet became entangled in the rank melon vines, and once or twice I stopped to secure a bunch of grass blossoms. Soon we passed the rows of negro cabins, but for once they were deserted. I looked vainly for Cylla and Ansel. There was no one near. I listened intently, hoping to hear the laughter of my playmates, but no sound broke the stillness. The next house will be Maum Rhina's, thought I, joyfully. They will all be there, I suppose. I released maumer's hand, and ran hurriedly up to the cabin, but the door was shut.

"Oh! where are they, maumer?" cried I. "They are all gone, and I wish now I had not come," I added, disconsolately.

Maumer smiled down in my discontented face.

"You'll soon see 'em, poppet. Don't yo' hear de speritables?"

"Yes," responded I, "but that singing comes from a long way off; and oh! maumer!" exclaimed I, "they are at Maum Sukey's."

For a moment she did not reply, and then, as she quickened her steps, she said:

"Yo' know maumer lubs yo', enty, my baby?"

"Yes," replied I.

"Maumer wants her baby ter be a lady, an' as bol' as er lion."

To this I made no comment. We were rapidly approaching the last cabin in the row, and a few of the negroes advanced to meet us. One was Maum Betty. She looked at me attentively, then in a tone intended to re-assure, maumer said:

"Hit's all right, aunty. Come on."

Cylla and Ansel came up smiling, and already I felt my spirits rise. Outside the door stood many negroes, old and young, male and female. As it was Sunday, each one was dressed to do honor to the holy day.

"Come in, aunty," said Maum Betty.

And, with maumer holding my hand, we approached the open door. What I saw was a low, smoke-begrimed room, with benches arranged on three sides next to the wall, and on these benches were seated men and women, who stopped singing as we drew near. And then, from the singers, my eyes wandered to something in the middle of the floor, a long bench on which something or some-

body lay. A white sheet was thrown over it, and at the lower end was placed a saucer, filled with salt.

What was under that sheet? A feeling of abject terror seized me, and I clung with all my strength to the door post. In vain maumer urged me to go in with her.

"No, no!" I cried; "let me go out."

"Yo' come in. Dat's a good chile, an' I'll gib yo' all tree er dese yer aiggs," said Maum Hagar, holding forth a gourd, in which were three eggs. Not even this bribe moved me.

"Try um wid some bene," suggested Maum Betty.

"See yer, my baby, yer's some bene; yo' come in wid maumer like er good gal, an' Maum Betty'll mek yo' a whole plate full er bene candy dis ebenin'. Come da'l'in'."

I would not have budged for a mountain of bene candy.

"Aunty, yo's got ter use fo'ce. Hit's fur de chile's good."

Some of the women that stood near, said:

"Fotch um up ter de scratch, Aunt Sally."

In another minute my hand was unclasped from the door-post, and I was led up to the bench in the middle of the floor. Once there, a horrible fascination held me spell-bound. I saw the sheet turned down, and then, oh, horror! There lay Maum Sukey, her mouth drawn down, her eyes shut. The tattoo marks looked deeper than usual, while her long hands, resembling claws, were crossed on her breast. The rags were discarded, and she was dressed in white from head to foot. Her very face was encircled by a band of white. For a minute, I could not turn my eyes away, and then, with a piercing shriek, I broke away from maumer, and rushed through the open door. Maum Betty hurried after me, but I eluded her outstretched hand.

"Ketch 'er, Cylla, an' I'll gib yo' a pan er clabber."

Bare-headed and breathless I sped down the road. I could hear the quick feet of Cylla behind me. I looked back with despairing eyes. She was close beside me. In another minute her hand was on my arm.

"I's got um, Aunt Betty."

Maum Betty took me in her arms, and carried me, kicking and screaming, back to maumer, where I was set down.

"Now, aunty, 's yo' time. Rub 'er han's

ober Aunt Sukey's face, an' 'e'll nebber be fraider nut'in' no mo'."

"It's yo' duty, Sister Sally," urged Maum Hagar.

The next minute, my hand was passed over the cold face of the dead. The screams died on my lips. I stood passive and mute. And then the smoked walls; the negroes, the white-robed figure, receded slowly from my eyes. It seemed to me I was sinking down, down through endless space.

When I opened my eyes, I was lying under an oak tree, with my head on maumer's lap. Cylla was fanning me with a palmetto leaf, while Maum Betty was rubbing my feet. There was a smell of burnt feathers in the air, and close by was a cup of bene and a calabash, in whose depths reposed three eggs.

"Dat's right, honey ! She's comin' roun', aunty. Look at yo' aiggs an' bene. Neber min', yo's er lady, an' Maum Betty's gwin' ter mek yo' some candy an' er cake, an'—"

"Yo' shall hab dat chany cup in my chist, poppet," whispered maumer in my ear.

"An' oh ! my baby, my precious lam', git up an' be yo'se'f. Maumer done it fur yo' good," sobbed my nurse, as she pressed my cold hands to her wet cheek.

"She's de lady ! Dat's what she is," added Maum Rhina. Cylla's gwinter play wid um dis bery ebenin', enty, Cylla ? An' she's gwinter gib um dat pooty black pullet, too."

Surely, with eggs, bene, praise, and the promise of a black pullet, I should have been happy ; but I was hardly appreciative just then. The cool river breeze ruffled my wet hair. Maumer's caressing hand smoothed out the folds of my white dress.

"Oh ! she's a real lady," resumed Maum Rhina, approvingly, and the others chimed in with, "de chile's a bo'n lady."

Meanwhile, the "bo'n lady" lay, limp and still. Despite the caresses and laudation, she could think only of the cold, dead face in the cabin, close by.

A LITTLE SOUTH AMERICAN.

BY OLIVE THORNE MILLER.

NOTHING could be more gentle and winning, while the sun was up, than a queer little South American animal, which I studied nearly a year, nor anything more full of pranks than the same little creature when the "vulgar luminary" was well out of sight on its way to China. All the long hours of daylight he passed simply as a ball of fur, deaf to all coaxing, oblivious alike of friend and foe ; but during the night he was wide awake, and as full of life as any monkey.

Not being able to see in the dark easily, limits our acquaintances in the animal world, and among others, with all my efforts, I never knew the kinkajou as I wished, for the light, even the dimmest, was a damper upon his freedom. I could listen, to be sure, and I did, through as many nights as I cared to give to so unsatisfactory a proceeding. What I heard was certainly curious and suggestive, and I could fancy all sorts of performances—turning of summersaults, dancing of jigs, queer pushing, shuffling,

rustling, and gnawing, with straining of the joints of the cage, rattling of dishes, and now and then a fall to the floor, enough to break his bones.

Evidently he was my gentle pet no longer, but a wild beast trying to escape. Yet, even then, when his pranks were wildest, if I lifted the blanket and spoke to him, he quickly thrust out a cold hand to be warmed, and gently rubbed a soft nose against my hands, though two minutes after I left, the strange sounds were resumed.

The morning showed signs of his deeds ; paper that had covered the floor, torn to bits ; sawdust, scattered far and wide out on the carpet ; his much-prized nest box, gnawed, pulled from its fastening if possible, and upset on the floor ; water-cup bottom up and the cage flooded ; heavy woolen blanket, torn to ribbons, or made into "drawn work," more intricate than any design in the pattern-book. These were the results that proclaimed his night's amusements. Woe to the household if he

succeeded in opening his door! Every standing thing that was upsetable in the rooms was upset, every hanging thing not firmly secured was pulled down, pictures were taken from the wall, statuettes turned over, baskets and boxes emptied. And the guileless author of all the mischief was curled up in his box, or on it, sleeping the sleep of innocence, and on being aroused, turning upward a gentle, winning little face that disarmed the severest housekeeper at once.

Happily there were several hours between sun-down and bed-time in which to study the odd little creature, whose manners were most curious and uncommon. From the moment he aroused himself, stretched his limbs, yawned, thrust out his long tongue, and climbed down from his open cage for a frolic, he was most interesting. He was deliberation itself in his usual movements, hobbling around the room like a small bear, his long hind legs and turned-in toes giving him a peculiarly awkward gait; climbing tables and chairs, and coming down head-first in a cautious manner. If startled, he galloped clumsily back to his corner, scrambled into the cage, pulled himself up to his nest, curled down out of sight, and stayed there till all was quiet again.

His round, spice-box nest, eight inches in diameter, was his delight, by day to sleep in and by night to tear to pieces. Now, spice-boxes are not very costly, but they come in sets, and with each one of the proper size came several smaller ones; so, after over-stocking my kitchen pantry and filling all my empty shelves, I put an end to the fun by getting a grocer's measure of the right size. This, being very thick, of hard wood and iron bound, was too much for his teeth, and when fastened by screws to a pair of iron brackets, defied all his attempts to destroy it. The blankets to sleep on and to keep him warm were lashed to the box; else they would not be in place five minutes.

Fond as the kinkajou was of his nest, when the door was open he discovered a place he liked even better. This was the top of his cage, four feet from the floor, where during the evening laid a thick double grey blanket, into the folds of which he delighted to creep and peep out at us, when the room was cooler than he liked. To reach this snug retreat, he climbed an arm-chair, which

stood beside it, pulling himself first up to the seat, then to the arm, and then the back. When the room was of a temperature to please him, and consequently intolerable to us, he liked to lie outside the blanket in the oddest attitudes; sometimes flat on his back, with legs stretched to their utmost, sometimes on his stomach, with head hanging over the edge, in a way to break his neck, one would think. Head down was always a favorite attitude with him, and in the beautiful ball he made of himself, it was not only turned down, but completely covered in the most smothering way.

The positions into which the kinkajou put his incredibly lithe body were marvelous; it often looked as though he had not a bone under his skin. He could bend his back in a perfect bow either way, turn and twist arms and legs into any impossible position, flatten himself to creep under a low book-case, or narrow himself to pass between two books on a shelf. Any place where he could hold on was perfectly satisfactory. He sat on the sharp edge of a spice-box with all four feet (or hands) side by side, and so comfortably, that if he wished to eat he removed one hand for the purpose, and balanced himself easily on three, while he disposed of his lunch.

On one occasion, passing from a small table to the top of a stove a foot away, he had put one hand and one foot on the stove, but before releasing his hold of the table, decided to eat the slice of banana he held in the other hand; so, all attitudes being equally agreeable, he simply rested there, one foot on the table and the tail laid across it, holding on to the further edge, and one foot and one hand on the stove. In this strange, unnatural position he remained, eating with the utmost deliberation, and washing his hands before he passed on. The stride of his hind limbs was remarkable. Climbing from the top of a chair to the mantel, ten or twelve inches away, and as much higher, he put up two hands and then one foot beside them before letting go of the chair. Then he did not jump, but pulled himself up.

His eating was an interesting operation, and took place only at night. His diet was entirely of fruit, which he invariably took in his mouth, but used a hand, sometimes two, to aid in managing it. He bit a piece

off with the side teeth, threw back his head, and crushed it between the tongue and the roof of the mouth, which was crossed with bony-looking ridges. When he came to me he ate apples, but the first time he saw a banana he fairly snatched it with both hands, so that I could not get it away to peel for him. He tore the skin, and devoured it so greedily that he was furnished with bananas from that time.

Generally he ate sitting up like a kangaroo, but when the piece was large he sometimes laid down on his back or side, and brought both hands and feet into use to help. Occasionally, if convenient, he sat up against a book or a stick of wood, leaning on one elbow with a most sentimental air.

The kinkajou's preparations for sleep were no less peculiar. He often curled his tail from the tip into a perfectly regular coil, which he used for a cushion, sitting upon it, and letting his pretty little finger-like toes hang over the edge; but if he wished to sleep, he placed his face on this cushion, put his hands around and over, or tucked them in behind his head, and drew the long hind legs and feet up around the whole, making a complete ball. Sometimes when on the floor he curled the tail around outside. This was his favorite attitude for sleeping through the day.

My little South American was one of the most nervous and observing creatures I ever saw; not a movement or a sound escaped his notice when awake. He would lie on my shoulder or the back of a chair by the hour, and watch the shadows—especially his own—as they fell on the carpet; he listened to the noises outside, cats, dogs, the elevated railroad, the latter with manifest disapproval.

He never liked to have any one come up behind him. A sudden noise startled him greatly, and his tiny hand had always a nervous jerk when I held it in mine. He had a most sensitive organization. At a distance, he liked to sit up and look at us, but if we moved to approach him, he turned his back, cuddled into a corner, or buried his head under a blanket. It was not fear, for he readily came up on us, and, in fact, became Troublesomely familiar at last.

He was playful in a quiet way. He amused himself with a string, as a kitten does, lying on his back and using all fours to toss

it up and pull it around. In the same way he played with a long gold chain, biting and tossing it around, and he was extremely ticklish. His principal plaything was his own tail, which had a curious appearance of independent motion. It curled around his neck, laid itself over his eyes, or moved back and forth before his face, while he, lying on his back, seized it, pretended to bite and worry it. The card-table was wonderfully fascinating to him; the cards he liked to put his sharp teeth into, and the cabbage pegs were simply irresistible.

The little animal was pretty as well as interesting; about the size of a small cat, fifteen inches from tip of nose to root of tail (to be exact), with a furry, prehensile tail, sixteen inches long, which was always curled over at the tip. He had kinky wool, of a beautiful golden-brown color, darker on the back, and shining golden tips in the daylight; this stood straight out all over his body excepting on the back of his hands, where it was silky and laid flat.

His hands, though without opposable thumbs, were beautifully shaped, with long, delicate fingers, ribbed to the knuckles, with double joints, enabling him to bend them either way, and soft, thick cushions or pads inside, so that he was shod with silence. His feet were exactly like his hands, excepting a long heel-bone. Both hands and feet had long claws instead of nails, and were flesh-colored inside. His head was really beautiful, shaped somewhat like a cat's; the face was of a greyish color; he had delicate, sensitive ears, not large, but very wide-open and movable with every emotion; his eyes were enormously large for his size, very full and prominent, black and gentle in expression, and over the inner corner of each was a little tuft of hair like a cat's whiskers, about an inch and a half long.

He had also whiskers on the sides of his nose like a cat's, and another tuft of similar length under the chin. The nose was bare, and the nostrils were the peculiar shape of the lemur's. His tongue was of great length, and very thin, for what purpose I could not discover. Some writers say that it is to collect insects from crevices in bark, while others affirm that it is to gather honey stored away by bees. I could not induce my pet to touch any insect at my com-

mand, and he did not show fondness for sweets.

Stealthy movement and almost entire silence were characteristic of the kinkajou. In all the time he lived with us, we seldom heard a sound from him. Once, when accidentally hurt, he uttered a chattering sound like nothing so much as that made by a stick drawn across a picket fence, at the same time showing his teeth like a snarling dog ; also, he repelled strangers with a rough breathing, a sort of "huff." When asleep, we sometimes heard from under the blanket where he lay, a low "yap" like a dreaming puppy's, or a whine like a dog's. Save these few times, he never uttered a sound.

As time passed, and he became better acquainted and lost all fear, he grew more affectionate and sociable. Especially he did so with his particular mistress and friend, to whom he had always showed partiality. In his wildest days, he would always put a soft hand through the wires, generally two of them, to be held, or to seize a finger to lick. He liked to have me hold my face near the wires, and let him put his hands on it. Every moment that he was out he insisted on being upon me, my lap, my arm, or, best of all, my shoulder, where he would lie at full length, head outwards, to watch the room, with his tail around my neck as an anchor. Nor did he lie quiet even there. One moment he would suddenly turn and lick my cheek ; then, as unexpectedly, would he take a gentle nip at my ear, and first and last and always jerk at my hair, which he seemed to regard as made for him to pull down, tangle, and play with.

Of this he made a business, standing on my shoulder, putting both hands on my head, and settling himself for a good frolic. What he wished to accomplish I never found out, for no one could long endure the rough treatment. If I succeeded in keeping him off my shoulder, he would establish himself on my arm, which he clasped with all four limbs, and held on for dear life, while he licked or playfully bit my hand or wrist. To shake him off was utterly impossible ; he had a wonderful grip, and the more one shook, the closer he held.

As the weather grew warm, this little fur

boa was not so comfortable around the neck ; neither did I enjoy the warm little body glued to my arm ; but it was impossible to get relief. If I put him down, or upon some one else for a rest, he would climb over them, and amuse himself till I made some movement or spoke, when instantly his quaint little face turned, he abandoned all else, and ran for me. When I made violent effort to drive him away, pushing or in any way exciting him, he never was scared away ; the more he was alarmed, the more frantically he would run for me, clamber up my chair, and mount to my shoulder as though that were his haven of refuge. The more I disturbed and pushed and tried to shake him off, the tighter he clung, and the more persistently he returned. Sometimes, when particularly affectionate, he threw all four arms (or legs) around my head so as completely to embrace it, and buried his teeth in my hair.

Trying to retain him on my lap by keeping the room still and never relaxing vigilance for a moment, if any sudden noise, a laugh, a door opened, or anything startled him, he would slip through my hands in spite of my efforts to hold him, scramble to my shoulder, throw his tail and perhaps an arm around my neck, and hold closely enough nearly to choke me.

This soon became intolerable. I could neither read nor do anything, except devote myself entirely to the kinkajou. I went away from home for a month—this was June—and during that time he never cared to come out of the cage. When the door was opened for evening, he would look gravely out, sniff loudly, and look slowly around the room, then, in a few moments, curl down again to sleep. I hoped he was cured of his troublesome fondness, but on my return he came out at once, and proceeded to amuse himself and torment me in the same old way.

The weather was now very warm, and I could not endure his embarrassing attentions. I would not keep him confined to his cage, so I presented him to the National Museum at Washington, where he was not so gentle and amiable as he had been with us, but bit and scratched, and, in fact, went quite back to savagery.

OUR DOOR-BELL.

BY W. HEIMBURG.

EVEN on Christmas eve we doctors have no rest! Perhaps my wife has just lighted the tiny candles on the Christmas tree, and, with a laughing glance at the stereotyped Christmas gift, a pair of embroidered slippers, which she has regularly bestowed upon me for the last thirty years, puts her hand on the door-latch to call, "Husband, you can come now!"

Just at that instant, the bell peals shrilly through the house. A doctor's bell—at least ours—has a very peculiar tone, sharp and unpleasant. Is it because it is pulled with anxiety, with terrified haste, or is it the consciousness that a man must leave his cosy home, and go out into the storm and rain, to the bedside of a sick person, perchance a dying one? I do not know, but my wife and I agree that the shrill sound seems to thrill every nerve, especially at night. On Christmas eve the old bell rings with a particularly harsh note.

Surely no one ought to be ill on the festival of joy and peace; but, alas! what have I not experienced on Christmas eve! I have seen the father of a family die, suddenly stricken, apparently from perfect health. I have stood by a young mother's bedside, and laid her new-born child in her arms, just as the old city musician and his band struck up:

"From holy heaven I descend."

I have seen the poor traveling-apprentice, found benumbed with cold on the highway, open his eyes, and poured him out a glass of Christmas punch. I have told little ones, ill with measles, the story of the Christ child, and have pulled Shoemaker Blaukenfeldt's pretty Lore away from the railing of the bridge, over which she was going to leap into our little river, because her sweet-heart had deserted her.

These are things that happen every day, are they not? Yet, on the 24th of December, we regard them with different eyes; at least, so it seems to me. And as I recall the Christmas eves that have passed since I began to practise my profession as a physician here in Oldberg, two out of the

thirty stand forth in peculiarly clear and vivid hues. No wonder! I am daily reminded of them.

Our town is small; it now contains only five thousand inhabitants: ten years ago, of which time I am about to speak, there were fewer still. It lies off the highway of travel. The railroad makes a curve as though to avoid disturbing our quiet existence by the whistling and rumbling of engines. The tower of the only church really ought to be famed as a curiosity; it slants, not quite so much as its well-known companion in Pisa, but approximately. There is absolutely nothing else worth seeing, unless we include a few iron bullets imbedded in the wall of the town-hall, and said to have come from Tilly's cannon.

The ancient, grass-grown walls, strewn with violets, still surround the red-tiled, gable-roofed houses. In summer, white underclothing, hung there to dry, flutters merrily in the breeze, and the boys play Indians on them. The streets are empty and ill-paved, and in the market-place stands a stone Roland. At the end of one of these quiet streets is my house, a two-story building, with a low ground-floor, and a sandstone bench at the door, over which droop the boughs of an elderberry bush. When it blooms in summer, all the old women in the neighborhood come and beg my Line for a few blossoms to dry. In Oldberg people cure all diseases with elderberry or camomile tea—a sorry fact for the physician.

The house is roomy and silent, far too large for a lonely couple like ourselves. A cool, vaulted hall runs through the centre. On the right are my apartments, waiting-room and office; on the left Caroline's rooms. There she sits at the window, behind her pots of flowers, knitting or sewing, as charming now as when a girl of eighteen she became my wife. She has a pleasant outlook. There is no house opposite to us. Provost street runs directly in front of us to the old Provost House down below. Line can see the high-arched door in the wall, and the tops of the elm trees waving in the gar-

den. In winter, the narrow, three-story structure is plainly visible between the bare branches.

There was a time when I did not like to look at that door—but I am describing my Line's window seat. In the recess hangs a picture, twined with garlands of ivy, a girl's head, painted on ivory, which looks inexpressibly lovely in its narrow, gold frame. I was going to speak of this beautiful head, with its wealth of raven locks.

About ten years ago, I used to call at that house once or twice each week, while making my round of professional visits. A near view showed plainly how rapidly it was going to ruin. Its owners no longer cared for it; they were building handsome new residences on adjoining estates; and it served merely as a temporary lodging when one of the barons was compelled to spend a short time in our little town for the transaction of official business. But at the time I mention the second story was occupied. A distant relative of the family, a Countess Seefeld, lived in the gloomy, wainscotted rooms with her daughter, and I had the honor of attending her as her family physician.

She was a pale, sickly woman, who had an extremely small income, but would not, on any account, have acknowledged the fact. God has bestowed on doctors, who have dealings with nervous women, the faculty of entering into all sorts of caprices; so, with angelic patience, I allowed her to tell me over and over again that she had merely chosen this secluded little town because the noise and bustle of great capitals did not suit her disordered nerves, and that her residence here gratified her desire for rest and quiet. I nodded, agreed with her, and pretended not to see the shabbiness of her black-silk dress, nor the extreme parsimony that marked every detail of her household.

She always added, "Of course, when Ilse has grown up, I must return to society; at least for a time."

"Until the little countess is married," I used to reply.

Then the dull eyes sparkled.

"Yes, my dear doctor, she is very beautiful. She will make a sensation, won't she?"

Yes, she was beautiful. The girl was so lovely that it seemed as though the ancient race of Seefeld, ere dying out, had sought to

put forth one last, wonderful flower. She had no trace of the cold, aristocratic reserve that shrinks from revealing a sensitive spot to any fellow-mortals. No, Ilse was as artless as any peasant child, as natural as the birds fluttering in the elm-boughs before her windows.

Whenever it was possible, she left the big, dreary rooms and her stately mother, ran over to our house, entered my Line's sunny room, sat down on the platform at the window, made her first attempts at sewing, hugged and kissed my fair-haired wife, rattled on the piano, laughed like an elf, and, after rushing out again at the door like a whirlwind, left behind her a stillness that often brought tears to Line's eyes. She was so unhappy because we had no children.

For Ilse's sake, it was hard for me to pass the high-arched doorway. But, if I happened to omit my visit a few days, because I actually had not the time to go, old white-haired Maruschka appeared and summoned me in her mistress' name; the countess could not dispense with my advice.

Well, I went, as I have said, for the child's sake. I never received any other payment than a grateful glance from her blue eyes, and had to endure many a trial of patience, for the countess was fully equipped with all the provoking whims of a nervous woman, and understood how to torment her physician most thoroughly.

Good heavens! More than once I have left her in a rage, banging the door behind me, so that the old three-story building shook to its foundations. More than once I have written a note requesting the lady to seek other medical advice. But, when Ilse glided into my room and gazed anxiously at me with her bright eyes, I let myself be dragged over to the house again to prescribe for a new ailment discovered the night before.

Well, there are nervous women in the world, and that this one had become so is certainly no marvel. Her husband, a spendthrift who squandered everything; her only son, the heir, on whose protection and aid the widow and her young daughter were entirely dependent, killed in a duel for a mere trifle; the estates in the possession of strangers, of whom she knew nothing beyond their name; no refuge save this ruinous old building, whose shelter was bestowed as a deed of charity; forced to battle for existence on an

annual income of two hundred thalers: it is excusable that the lady's mood was not always, or rather was never, a cheerful one. Her hopes rested entirely upon her daughter's increasing beauty. She still possessed diamonds, which she guarded with Argus eyes; she would have died rather than have sold a single gem. Once, when I insisted upon a change of air because her health was so wretched, she owned that she would be able to afford it but for the necessity of keeping all her property for Ilse's future.

"One or two seasons in Berlin, and Ilse will be provided for, my dear doctor."

On this she relied. Nothing was too hard for her; no sacrifice too great for the sake of her child. In spite of her insufferable arrogance, the whimsical, sickly woman became a heroine in my eyes when I saw her teaching her daughter, with the most punctilious accuracy, never omitting a lesson, never betraying fatigue. Alas! how often, after several hours' instruction, she sank down almost fainting.

"You are taxing your strength too much, countess," I ventured to remonstrate.

She drew herself up proudly.

"I owe my daughter an education."

"Yes, yes! But we have good teachers here. Let the little countess have private instruction," I suggested.

"Here?" she asked, in a tone of blended amazement, contempt, and superiority, while her pale lips expressed such scornful irony that I thought:

"Well, teach yourself into a consumption for aught I care. I'll never say anything again! As if we were all a set of idiots, and had no suspicion of what a little countess needs to fit her for the marriage-market!"

True, the mother's educational efforts were not all smooth sailing. This pretty, smiling child did not lack character. What she once undertook she accomplished, constantly returning to the one idea, which always contained a healthful thought, good, sound logic. For instance, one summer evening—Ilse was about seven years old—Maruschka, the Polish maid servant, came running over to beg the doctor to call at once; the child had met with an accident.

I went, and the mother who received me told me the following story: Somebody had given the little countess a doll, a rude peass-

ant, dressed in a red frock, with blue ribbons on its cap, and a medley of all sorts of colors. The mother had a theory that children ought not to play with ugly things. Unluckily, this doll was little Ilse's favorite. Heaven knew why. Children are so queer! And one day the favorite disappeared; *nota bene*, the mother had thrown it into the fire.

Amid floods of tears, the house, the garden, every possible place of concealment was searched, and the child became so excited that the countess was obliged to send for me. She led me to the little girl, who lay on the sofa, sobbing violently, and sat down beside her with a new doll, dressed in wonderfully fine clothes.

"I won't have it! I won't have it!" screamed Ilse, hoarse with emotion, striking at the toy. "I want my own dear doll back again."

What could I do? Persuasion was useless. At last the countess forcibly placed the new doll in the child's arms. Ilse started up, ran to the window, and flung it out.

"I don't want a new one," she said piteously, looking at me with her mournful eyes.

I motioned to the countess to leave me alone with Ilse, took the little trembling hands, and asked her to tell me all about it. She had loved that doll so dearly, she said, she didn't want any other. I remonstrated with her, told her that the doll was ugly, not a suitable plaything for her. In vain. She took some soothing drops, and at last fell asleep, but the fact remained, and she never played with another doll.

The child gradually grew up into a girl, and a very beautiful girl; but in other respects, by no means after her mother's heart.

"What careless language!" the countess complained. "Doctor, she gets it from you. I must beg you to be more cautious."

I looked surprised. True, I did not know how to use scraps of French, but I was conscious of no other defects. I met Countess Ilse's laughing eyes, and secretly shared her amusement.

Yet, I was sorry that she came less frequently to my house, and made only short visits, that she crossed the street so slowly in her trailing dress, and no longer ventured to raise her eyes. True, when she entered my Line's room she was just the same as of old, laughed and played a waltz on the old

spinet, beating time with her little feet. Sometimes she was as still as a mouse, sitting quietly before my wife's tiny book-case.

There were no books at Ilse's home, or at least no good German ones. The young mind had been starved on the French ragouts her mother had learned by heart in her own youth, and Ilse possessed a thorough German nature, beauty-loving and somewhat imaginative. What has a woman of the world to do with sentiments? They are provincial, only fit for dressmakers' apprentices. Who can account for Ilse's being different? I can still see her radiant face and tearful eyes when, one Sunday evening before Easter, I read aloud to her the walk from *Faust*.

"Freed from their icy chains are stream and brook." She did not say a word, only wept. Then she wanted the book.

"Oh, no, little countess, you are only seventeen, and if mamma should know? Later, later!"

"I won't tell mamma!" she answered, earnestly.

I laughed and shook my head.

"Come over as often as you like, child. I will gladly read to you. But take it with you—never!"

So she came more frequently than usual. She was permitted to stop her studies now; she must look fresh and blooming, for, after Christmas, or rather after New Year's, she was going, not to Berlin, but to a little Thuringian court, where it was desirable that the young beauty should appear as radiant as possible. The countess corresponded with a jeweler and several dress-making establishments in the capital, and expressed to me her regret that her daughter took no interest in these matters.

"But," she added, "the lion has not yet tasted blood, my dear doctor; she will breathe more freely in her natural sphere."

These words were spoken on a gloomy October day. Ilse, I knew, was with my wife, the only society the poor child was allowed to have. I went down stairs, shaking my head, for the mother's experiment of sending her daughter alone to D—to visit a cousin whom she scarcely knew, merely for the purpose of throwing the young girl into a society often very mixed, and, it was hoped, by a lucky hit, into the arms of a wealthy husband, made me feel troubled and

anxious. The child had become as dear to me as though she were my own. If her mother were only going with her, but—the money did not seem to hold out, or, at any rate, Ilse was to go alone to her relatives in D—.

Still absorbed in thought, I entered Line's room. It was already dusk, and the fire-light danced brightly on the floor. My wife was not there, but in her stead I found another companion with Ilse. She was leaning on the spinet, twisting a vine-tendril between her fingers, as if embarrassed. Before her, with his back to me, stood a man in an overcoat, a tall, slender, brown-haired fellow.

"The deuce! Is it you, Ernest?" I exclaimed, clasping him in my arms.

"Yes, uncle; pardon my taking you by surprise. I fear—" He stopped abruptly. "I thought aunt was sitting over yonder in front of the book-case, and—" His handsome face flushed crimson. "Pardon me, fraulein!" he added, turning to the smiling girl.

"Ernest Klauss, royal architect," I said, presenting him, "Countess Isabella Seefeld."

He blushed still more deeply, bowed, and said:

"I am on my way to B—to superintend the building of a church."

Line came unsuspiciously in, after the lapse of nearly an hour. When I met her in the hall, and was going to reproach her for her long absence, the little woman grew angry, and said she had been obliged to buy a winter cloak, for the snow would soon be falling, and one ought not to delay such things to the last moment. How could she know that Ernest was coming? She would look after the supper at once.

I was about to submit to her remonstrances like a dutiful husband, when the bell rang. A woman, holding her coughing child, wrapped in a shawl, in her arms, appeared and asked for the doctor. So duty prevented me from thinking of other matters, for—who knows?—if the woman with the child had not come, then the seamstress with cramps in her stomach, and the apprentice with his sore finger, those two might not have found time to look so deeply into each other's eyes. Still, of course, this is foolish. I should have

changed nothing ; what is to be always happens.

When two hours after I crossed the hall, I found the two young people still alone in the room, which was now perfectly dark, but they were no longer silent. Aha ! they were talking and chattering as if they had known each other for years.

"Where is my wife?"

Good heavens ! She was in the kitchen, cooking a leg of venison for her sister's son.

I lighted the lamp, put it on the table, and watched the two look at each other in the sudden glare. I enjoyed the sight.

To a physician's eye there is nothing more beautiful than a fresh young face. And these two were not only healthy in mind and body, but handsome too. He is my nephew, but I must say, he was as handsome in his way as Ilse was in hers—tall and slender as a pine-tree, with clear, sparkling eyes ; in a word, the very incarnation of health. A splendid young fellow ! He was then just five-and-twenty.

Ilse would not stay to supper. She put on her little cloak, and took her leave. But, when we were sitting over our venison in the back room, clinking our wine glasses, her little dark head peered in at the door.

"May I come?" she asked in her charming way. "Mamma has a headache, and has gone to bed, and I'm so lonely up there."

She sat between me and Ernest, listening patiently as he talked of his invalid mother, of his studies, of his present position, and all sorts of family affairs. When the clock struck ten, and Ilse rose to go, I accompanied her as usual. Ernest joined us, and we walked together in the wan moonlight through the deserted street to the old house.

At the door she turned, and her eyes sought Ernest with a shy, happy glance. I saw it distinctly, and wondered, but did not trouble myself any farther about it. When I remembered it afterwards, scales seemed to fall from my eyes. But then ! I saw in the child only the daughter of a woman of noble birth, a future countess, lady of the court, or something of that kind. The handsome youth seemed to me no more dangerous than he did to the countess, who heard of my visitor from Ilse or myself. But who can read these young people's secrets ?

Ilse came still more frequently during the

fortnight that Ernest spent with us, and they talked frankly together about various things. He was an enthusiastic admirer of Grillparzer, and declaimed certain passages to her, while she listened with sparkling eyes, and promised to read his works. Whether they said anything else beside the crackling fire in Line's cosy little room, I don't know ; no one could have watched the pair more unsuspiciously than I.

Then he went away. He shook my hand with unusual warmth, and promised to come back soon. But Ilse seemed to me to have grown taller, and her eyes sparkled with a brighter light. She was more quiet than usual as she sat with my wife sewing on her Christmas gifts. If she had formerly sometimes made an arrogant little remark, as though conscious of her aristocratic birth, she now said nothing about these things, but once she made an observation somewhat to this effect : That nobility was inherent in the individual ; it came from the soul. Inherited escutcheons were no guarantee of a noble nature.

"Good heavens !" cried Line, greatly startled. "Pray, don't say that to your mother, Countess Ilse."

The young girl raised her eyes, and asked earnestly : "Why not ? I have courage to say much more ?

"Well," Line answered in a jesting tone, "you will think differently in six weeks, when you have whirled over the polished floor of the palace with the young princes."

"Who knows?" she answered, softly.

So the joyous Christmas festival approached. The day before the holy eve I saw Maruschka in the street, groaning under the weight of two huge boxes.

"Well, well," said I, "the Christ child is liberal !"

"They are for Countess Ilse," replied the old woman. "All sorts of things, an outfit big enough for a bride, and a fir-tree that will touch the ceiling too."

At the corner of the post-office I met Countess Ilse herself. On seeing me, she seemed inclined to turn into a side street. Then her little hand hastily slipped a letter into her grey-fur muff, while her sweet face flushed crimson under the blue veil wound around her little bonnet. Well, everybody has secrets at Christmas-tide. She gave me her left hand, and looked past me into a

shop-window. I could feel her slender fingers tremble.

"I'll come this evening as usual, dear doctor, and bring you the marchpane heart. I'll be at your house at six. Mamma doesn't give me her presents till eight."

"There will be something to give," I said jestingly about to pass on. But she held my hand firmly, and, as I remained standing, looking keenly at her, I thought she was about to speak.

"Well, countess?"

"This evening!" she faltered, walking away so rapidly that I shook my head as I looked after her.

When I returned home from my round of visits at twilight, there was already a sweet Christmas odor in the house of fresh cakes, pine-boughs, and wax-candles. Line stood in the kitchen, scaling carp for the festal banquet.

"Everything is ready," she cried joyously. "Only that horrid shoemaker has disappointed me. But it still lacks fifteen minutes of six. You must go down cellar for the wine. Husband, I have a presentment: I am certain Ernest will be here."

I put on my dressing-gown and went down cellar. I cannot describe how pleasant my Christmas eves have always been, nor how cosy my Line makes them. I knew that a kind message from her had been carried that day to every poor person's sick-bed. I knew that many would remember us with grateful hearts; that all who had any tie of connection with us would rejoice over some gift, down to Hector, who always found a sausage under the Christmas-tree. I anticipated with pleasure the sight of the little countess' merry blue eyes, and the box of the old friend, from whom I annually received a Westphalian ham and rye bread. And I looked forward also to the hours when I should sit beside my Line on the sofa, watch the tiny flames of the tapers burning on the tree, and talk of olden days, and the Christmas eves of my boyhood. Yes, people ought to rejoice.

Six o'clock struck; half-past six. Ilse did not come.

"She probably has so much to see at home," said Line. "I will light the candles at any rate."

She disappeared in the room where the Christmas-tree was hidden, and then rang

the bell. But a strange feeling of anxiety possessed me as I stood in the brilliantly lighted room; I listened attentively. I missed something.

Line, too, was silent. True, she admired her eagerly-desired, black-silk dress, and I the slippers. The maid-servant disappeared with a radiant face, carrying off her gifts, and Hector ate his sausage. Then we all three—my wife, the dog, and myself—sat gazing silently at one another. We were equally mute at supper, and while putting out the candles on the tree.

It was very wrong in the little countess; the last Christmas eve, and she did not come.

Then, just as we were going to bed, the bell rang sharply. Good heavens! What now?

We heard Dörte run to the door, heard shrill, excited voices. Then Maruschka rushed into the room.

"Oh, doctor, come, come quickly—our child—our little countess!"

I never before rushed out of the house and down the snow-covered street so quickly. Two or three bounds and I was at the top of the creaking old flight of winding stairs, and had passed through the ante-room into Ilse's chamber.

My first glance was at the bed; it was empty; but the young girl was leaning against the Dutch-tile stove; her features, by the dim light of the candle, looked almost distorted.

"Countess?" I asked.

"It is over now," she replied, in a voice she evidently strove hard to steady; "it is all over, dear doctor. I am myself again. Give me your hand—please tell him—" She stopped, for her mother appeared on the threshold.

"What was the matter, countess?"

"She was feverish, and became delirious," replied the pale-faced lady, scanning me from head to foot. "Prescribe some cooling lemonade, and send the willful girl to bed."

Ilse looked at me, and smiled scornfully.

"Thank you, I am perfectly well and in my right mind," she said. "Good-night, doctor. For heaven's sake, go!"

I turned angrily away. Something had happened; that was evident. But to send for me first, and then dismiss me in this way was too much.

"Good-night," I said curtly, and left the

room. Groping my way along the dark passage, unable to find the door, I heard a voice within say coldly :

"Good-night, mamma."

Then I ran against a wardrobe, and was about to call for a light, when a door opened, letting a flood of candle-light stream into the dark entry, a figure glided out, a girl's soft arms were flung around my neck, and a face wet with tears was pressed to mine.

"Remember me to him," she sobbed. Tell him I am the most miserable creature in the whole world. I love him better than he will believe, than he can imagine."

Again she flung her arms impetuously round my neck, and pressed her soft lips to my beard.

"Thank you for all you have done to brighten my life, you kind uncle doctor."

One more kiss, a whispered remembrance to "him," and she disappeared.

"Some one else may understand that," I murmured, wiping from my beard the young girl's tears—or my own? "A pretty Christmas eve, this!"

When, much disturbed, I entered my wife's room, whom did I see? Ernest, pale as a corpse, stretching his trembling hands towards me, while Line sat as rigid as a wax figure in one corner of the sofa.

"What news do you bring, uncle?" he asked hastily.

"None, my boy."

"You have just been with her; you must know how the matter ended?"

I looked at him with mingled astonishment and pity.

"Poor fellow, I thought you were more sensible," escaped my lips.

"Does she give me up?" he asked almost hoarsely.

"She sends her remembrances to you, if you are the 'he' of whom she whispered through her tears."

"Nothing more?" he gasped.

"She told her mother she was in her right mind."

He burst into a short laugh, threw himself into a chair, hurriedly drained a goblet of wine, and sat silent.

"But Ernest," Line began mournfully, "how could you suppose that her mother would ever consent—"

He started, glanced at his watch, and rose.

"The express train leaves at half-past

twelve. Good-night. Pardon me for disturbing you."

Hastily seizing his hat from the nearest chair, he left the room, and ere we had time to think, the street door closed, and he was gone.

"Do you know any of the particulars?" I asked my weeping wife.

"Only what he told me when he appeared before me so suddenly," she replied. "They have been in love with each other ever since the autumn, have kept up a correspondence, and to-day Ilse was to tell her mother, and try to obtain her consent that she should marry Ernest Klauss. She had said to him, 'As soon as I win mamma's "Yes," I will come to the doctor's. Wait for me there.' But he waited outside the door of her own house. Then Maruschka suddenly rushed out, you returned with her, and he, unable to endure the suspense any longer, came to me."

"Oh, the folly of youth!" I thought, and a tear ran down my beard. I still saw before me little Ilse's terribly altered face.

"It is hopeless," I said aloud, and Line, covering her eyes with her hand, nodded assent.

"How I pity them," she sobbed.

I was right. The next morning a heavy coach jolted over the snow-covered street. I saw a blue veil waved from the window a moment by a little hand, and Countess Ilse had gone.

Maruschka accompanied her to the railway-station, three miles away. On the very same day I received by mail a note that informed me that the writer, Countess Seefeld, found herself compelled to select another family physician, as I had failed to justify the great confidence she had always reposed in me. A very small sum of money was enclosed.

Very well, countess. We often receive undeserved rebukes: this one does not overwhelm me. A doctor gradually acquires a sort of elephantine toughness of hide, or he could not live at all. Only I could not banish the young girl's pale face from my mind.

Well, it was useless. But my Line grieved terribly in secret. I did not know whether she felt most for her nephew, who would not answer any of her letters, or for little Ilse. We no longer spoke of the matter.

One April morning, just as the fruit-trees

were blossoming, the postman brought a large envelope, with an immense coat of arms on the seal. After Line had examined the outside sufficiently, and was standing beside me, curious to know the contents, I drew out a card bearing the following words:

"The betrothal of her only daughter,
Isabella,
to

His Excellency Count Edwin von Mayenbach-Emmingen,
is most respectfully announced by
Countess Olga Seefeld, nee Countess Okowska."

"Well, Line, the matter is settled," I said.

But Line would not be consoled ; she wept as though her heart would break. She had had a different opinion of Ilse. How was it possible, how was it possible ! She would never have believed that a girl could forget so easily.

I kept my vexation to myself, took my hat and cane, and went to the City of Hamburg for my glass of beer. Of course, everybody there had heard the news, and a young lawyer gave me some information about Count von Mayenbach-Emmingen. He was reputed to be immensely rich, but he was a man already advanced in years, and had had a dissolute past career.

Poor little Ilse !

We sent no congratulations ; we could not bring ourselves to do so. I merely asked Maruschka when the wedding would take place, and learned that the countess was very angry : the future bride had asked a whole year's delay, but the mother hoped to conquer her daughter's opposition to an earlier date.

"Is Countess Ilse coming back ?" Maruschka shook her grey head. "We shall go to D—— in a fortnight at latest."

On the 4th of September, my birthday, on which a graceful little figure had always crossed my threshold early in the morning with a bunch of monthly roses, a small package arrived addressed to me, and when I opened it, Ilse's lovely face, painted on ivory, looked forth. But how grave, how altered ! On the back of the miniature she had written, with a lead pencil :

"As we speak no evil of the dead, do not condemn me."

"Don't scold any more, Line," I said, deeply moved ; "she has been forced into the engagement. That is evident."

Life pursued its monotonous course, late autumn came, the wind swept the leaves from the elms, and the big, empty house

opposite, with its closed shutters, glimmered through the bare boughs. Winter brought its usual unwelcome guests to the abodes of men—coughs, fevers, and rheumatism. We doctors have so much to think about that I scarcely found time to rejoice that Ernest had gone to Italy, as his mother wrote. But Line, for the first time in long weeks, had a brighter face, and, as usual, gay wools lay on her work-table beside the inevitable slippers, which I was never expected to see and yet saw so often.

"I think Ernest will get over it, husband," she said, "if Ilse is only happy."

"May God grant it !" I answered, sighing.

And lo ! all at once Christmas was close at hand, booths were already erected in the market-place, all sorts of pretty novelties were displayed in the shop-windows, and a row of Christmas-trees extended along the street. It was snowing and freezing too ; there were delightful anticipations of skating and sleighing for the holidays.

Then, about a week before Christmas, Line came to meet me with a very agitated face, holding in her hand a black-bordered envelope.

"Just think, Wilhelm, Countess Seefeld has died very suddenly."

"Poor lady !" I replied ; "she did not have the pleasure of seeing her daughter an 'excellency.' I am sincerely sorry for her ; it was the object of her every thought and act, her only wish."

But Line seated herself at the writing-table, and wrote to Ilse as her heart dictated. The letter was almost illegible from tears."

"We can have but one mother," she said, "and in spite of all her whims, she loved Ilse almost foolishly."

"So dearly that she forced her into a marriage with an old libertine," I said bitterly.

"She did not know any happiness save wealth, Wilhelm," replied Line.

Well, I was satisfied, and the letter went.

The 24th of December finally arrived, and passed exactly as usual. The snow fell softly, and here and there a window was brightly lighted as I walked down the street on my return from my last round of visits, and Line had the Christmas-tree decorated, and was only waiting for me to light the candles.

The gifts were distributed, the carp were eaten, and the slippers fitted. We were sit-

ing in the corner of the sofa, looking at the candles on the tree, while Hector lay at our feet. The old clock in the corner struck ten, just as we stopped talking about Ilse.

"The door-bell rang just at this hour a year ago," said Line. "Oh, dear!"

"Well, it probably won't to-night," I was about to answer, but the words died on my lips, the door-bell pealed through the house with such a shrill, startling, terrified sound. I rushed through the passage, I hardly knew how, flung the bolt back, and tore the door open. A slender figure hurriedly crossed the threshold, a pair of soft arms clasped my neck, a girl's sweet, pale face looked out from amid the heavy folds of a black crape veil. But she did not speak a word, only clung to me trembling.

"Countess Ilse!" cried Line, running out, and we led her into the room, and did what people usually do for a fainting person. She wanted to stay with us, with Maruschka. That was all we could gather from her incoherent words. Then she said no more, but leaning her head against a corner of the sofa, wept silently, and we let her tears flow. Line slipped quietly away to prepare the little guest-room in the second story, and I went to the cellar and brought up some of my best port wine. When I offered her the fragrant glass, she raised her eyes and looked at me, with the tears still on her cheeks. "I knew it," she sobbed; "if I had only come to you last year!"

Then her head sank back again, and the pallor yielded to the fierce flush of fever. I felt the slender wrist, of course; we had a sick girl to care for.

I carried her up stairs in my arms, as I would have carried a child. When Line, with Maruschka's help, had laid her in bed, her senses failed, and, tortured by the visions of delirium, she shrieked for help as though pursued by some nameless horror.

Maruschka sat quietly beside the bed.

"It was too pitiful, doctor," she began, after a pause. "My mistress herself was horrified when she saw her future son-in-law, but, you know, the child's relatives all wanted her to be married; so they beset her with entreaties and flatteries, and when everything proved vain, they told her she must do it for her mother's sake. Oh, doctor, I know all about it. At first my mistress was going to yield to Ilse's despair-

ing entreaties, but when she saw the estates and the castles and the wealth, she would not give up the match. She could be iron. She died so suddenly that Ilse was not present; she had gone with her aunt and future husband to a court-ball. When she was told, she did not shed a tear; but she sat all night beside the corpse, just as she had returned from the ball, with the flowers in her hair.

"What happened after the funeral I don't know, but I heard from her aunt's maid that on the third day after Christmas, Ilse was to be quietly married, and go with her husband to Italy. Whether she made any objection I don't know. She was terribly pale and silent. Yesterday evening she entered my room suddenly, with her cloak and bonnet on, and said: "

"Come, Maruschka, and take a warm shawl, I'm going to walk."

"Of course I went with her—first to the snow-covered grave in the court-yard, then to the railway station. I followed and entered a car behind her. Oh, heavens! what an uproar there must be now in the chamberlain's house and throughout the city! They must know by this time that the young countess has run away."

This was a fine Christmas gift. I looked first at the old woman, then at the restless girl. She was the same brave little Ilse. I remembered the incident of the doll, and in spite of my anxiety, I could not help smiling. Yes, such a heart does not easily succumb. Bravo, Ilse!

At midnight, when the ringing of bells announced the sacred Christmas day, I opened a window in the adjoining room, and as the full tones floated over the sick-bed, the raving lessened.

"It is Christmas! At home!" I heard her whisper, and Maruschka's voice tenderly answered: "Go to sleep, child. Go to sleep, little countess." When all was still, the old servant glided softly up to me. "Will she be very ill, doctor?"

"She is very ill now, Maruschka. May God grant recovery."

That is just six years ago. Yes, time flies! I was just standing at the window looking over to the old house. A light is still burning in Ernest's study. But you've no time to lose. It is six o'clock, and Line does not like to be kept waiting. My wife becomes more impatient the older she grows.

Now the light vanishes, and all the bells are beginning to ring. The door in the high wall opens. I see dark figures emerge. Are they all there? Yes."

"Line," I call, "they are coming."

"I'll light the candles," answers grand-mamma.

Yes, Line has really become grand-mamma, for Ilse has called her "mother" ever since she became the wife of the architect, Ernest Klauss. Her marriage ceremony was performed in our house. I certainly never expected it six years ago. Ilse was dangerously ill, but recovered from everything—the disease and gossip occasioned by her flight. A splendid girl! a noble woman!

"For a little while I was not / at all," she said, while telling my wife, amid bitter tears, the story of her betrothal; "but, believe me, I would have cried 'No' at the very altar, if they had dragged me there."

"Why?" asked Line, taking the hand of the excited girl. Ilse flushed crimson, and lowered her eyes in confusion.

"I know, little Ilse. It is the story of the lost doll!"

And Line drew the young girl toward her, and tenderly stroked her dark hair. "Do you still remember that Christmas eve, child?"

Ilse nodded silently, hiding her face on Line's shoulder. The latter must certainly have practised some witchcraft, for not forty-eight hours after, "somebody" rang our door-bell; it was a very different sound from usual: at first faint, so that the note was feeble and timid, then impatient, almost imperious.

Whoever understands the language of bells might perhaps have thought, as I did, that the agent had sent us word that we had drawn the great prize in a lottery. But when I arrived the door had already been opened, and in the hall stood Line alone, looking at her own door.

"May I come into your room a little while?" she asked. "Somebody is in mine with Ilse."

"Indeed. Who is it?"

"Oh, you shall soon hear!"

She drew me into my room with her, sat down by the window, and did not utter a word, until at last the "somebody" appeared, leading by the hand the pale young girl, whose face was bright with joy.

Women certainly have the gift of match-making!

"Line, where did you get that fellow? Countess, do you really mean to be plain Frau Klauss?"

It was even so, and they were both in the greatest possible hurry. Ernest bought the old house, and fitted it up into a pretty little nest for his young wife. "Stylish," of course; on that point the young architect is a little—*pardon me*. It really looks very pretty, and it is cosy and pleasant to sit in the wainscotted rooms, by the green Dutch-tile stove, while the wind rattles the panes, and the old elm-trees rustle outside.

I often go over there, and tell the children about a little girl that could not be comforted for the loss of her old doll, though she received a new and far handsomer one. Ilse always laughs merrily, and the children chime in.

Hark! There they are! "Come in, the tree will be ready directly."

"The children must say their prayer now," the young mother says gravely, and the boy and the little girl, who is just learning to talk, clasp their tiny hands and repeat:

"The child that's born to-day,
Christ Jesus, Saviour dear,
Keep us from error's way,
Guide thou our hearts while here."

"Amen, children."

Then the bell on the other side of the hall rings. They run eagerly forward, but Ilse leans on my arm.

"Do you remember," she asks, "six years ago, when He guided my heart also into the right path?"

"Yes, my little daughter. The shrill peal of the bell is yet ringing in my ears."

Again the words died on my lips; the bell was jerked so hurriedly.

"Go in, children, I'll come soon; but didn't I say so? At the very beginning, too? Even on Christmas eve we doctors have no rest!"

"What is it?"

"What? Widow Merker's son, the soldier, has arrived on leave of absence. Will it do the sick woman any harm if he goes to her bed-side?"

"Heaven forbid! Joy never kills, especially on Christmas eve."

A HUMBLE CASTLE IN SPAIN.

BY WILLIAM M. BRIGGS.

I.

DURING a residence of several years in the southern part of Spain, I made acquaintance with a family, which afterward ripened into a lasting friendship, a friendship, in fact, so strong that, in course of time, they adopted me, after the Spanish fashion, into their family circle as a son. Misfortune fell upon them: and with misfortune came loss of friends and many things, those seeming trifles that give, perhaps, to the impoverished their bitterest moments. They removed from the city, and took possession of a small farm or *hacienda*, which, with a mountain vineyard, still remained to them at the foot of the Sierra Morena. Thither I accompanied them, and of that two years' residence I now give you some account.

We were a party of five: Don Peppe, with his wife Dolores, myself, and two well-grown lads, named respectively Frasco, the elder, and Ricardo, sometimes called for euphony Rico, or for convenience *el Chico*; but why *el Chico* I never knew, unless it were that, being the younger, youth may have been considered instead of size; but so far as the fitness of things went, you might as well have called a church-tower *chico*—quite as well!

My memory of those years is very rose-colored. Indeed, it is a delightful thing in Providence that unpleasant events have a faculty of dropping out of mind, while a crowd of agreeable ones remain; as if Life were a magical sieve, whose loops of escape were exactly fitted for all heavy and irksome objects to penetrate and fall through, leaving the others like nuggets of priceless gold.

One can imagine how agreeably we were established in our (I must confess) most singular domicile, a cottage on the sands, with the waves curling up to within some dozen rods of our very threshold, the sea-gulls circling round in white and dove-colored clouds, and now and then a gawky crane, standing on one leg, as if the other had entirely given up business and retired for life.

Close to the sea it stood: the soft grey banks around it, and below whiter and whiter they grew, till they ended in the pure snowiness of the beach; with the drifted sand to be swept out every day, as if we had had a snow-storm. There was something to me fascinating in this strangeness of life, and it grew upon me day by day. There were but two rooms for us to occupy, and they appeared, though one was large, almost too straitened for our accommodation. More, they seemed like some wayside *posada*, where muleteers are accustomed to find lodgings on the "cold, cold ground," and a stable for their beasts, happy to be sheltered for the night.

The house was a primitive edifice, a true Andalusian's peasant-house, low-walled, long, and almost windowless, and surmounted by a high-pitched roof. At one end a fantastic chimney reared itself, pinnacled and latticed like a dove-cote, domineering the whole building; and within, a mass and net-work of dusky rafters looked down on a cobble-stone floor, about forty by fifty feet in area. To this cavernous room there was but one window, with a swinging shutter, looking out on a desolate garden, long-neglected, and surrounded on every side by hedges of the prickly-pear.

To this apartment, with its immense height and size, there was an uncanny sort of charm as we entered it for the first time, its gloom so sharply contrasting with the splendid sunshine and brilliancy without. Blackened by age, cob-webbed by generations of spiders, it held at one end an enormous fire-place, canopied by a flue, trumpet-shaped and vanishing into the darkness above; it held or supported a shelf, protruding like the ugly lip of some giant negress, and the whole grotesque structure as if about to fall, hovered like some evil bird of prey, over the cavity below, where Dolores' fire of cork-wood lay slumbering and winking at the old earthen *puchero*, like a watchful tabby-cat; and always, indeed, Dolores shredding something, some veget-

able or herb for our noon-day meal, till I was forced to think of the pot of the prophets, or the caldron of Meg Merriles.

Throwing open the wooden blind of the window, and admitting all the light we could, I discovered one of the ancient inhabitants of the place, one of its by-gone *penates*, in the shape of a loathsome snake, which writhed and curled itself along the foot-board of the wall in futile efforts to escape through some opportune crack or crevice ; which opportunity came rather quicker than expected, through the descent of a timely poker.

Dolores, to whom a dirty house is worse than an evil spirit, was already busy with her broom. It was one of those self-torturing articles that semi-savage races seem to invent instinctively for the benefit of their womankind. It was a short-handled instrument, formed of the leaf of the scrub-palm, and operated through a dexterous twist of the wrist, by which every particle of dust could be licked up from the cobbles by turning the entire body, so that one went zig-zagging round the room in a kind of St. Vitus minuet, dizzying to behold ; but it was thoroughly Spanish, and Dolores was Spanish, and custom had inured her to her lot.

At one thing I was often amused whilst in Spain, viz., the rigid distinction between man's and woman's work ; they never infringed on each other, but were as distinctly marked as among the American Indians. It was a painful task, this sweeping the floor ; and once, when I thought Dolores overwhelmed with fatigue, I offered to take the brush in hand. She twitched it from me with indignation ; it was woman's work, not man's. I have seen the same thing among the lower Irish, and regard it as characteristic of all half-civilized communities !

Leading from this room, which formed parlor, kitchen, and cellar, was a narrow door of unpainted plank ; it opened into the one other apartment of our house, and was to it in size as the thumb to a big glove. It contained a barred window, barricaded with a heavy shutter for the night, and room for three little cots, the sleeping places for Frasco, *el Chico*, and myself.

Peppe, the father, was always saluted by that Spanish title of respect, the sonorous *Don* ! He was a man to be respected.

Far above his class in native intelligence (and the Spanish peasant is no fool), he commanded the esteem of his neighbors by his honesty, his intellect, and the worthiness of his heart. He was ever a ready counsellor ; he had been educated partly for a priest ; and—how the absurdity of life mingles with its more serious aspects !—had had the honor of being closely related to a man, who, after living the life of a saint on earth, hardly escaped being made one in heaven, from the physical (not psychological) phenomenon, that his body, after death, streamed with phosphoric light, the superstitious peasantry taking it for the halo of consecration !

He was the homeliest man on earth. If Doré, in delineating the features and form of *Don Quixote*, had taken Don Peppe for his model, Don Peppe could never have had a better likeness. Tall, meager, clad in faded garments, he stood like a point of exclamation ; his head, narrow and elongated, ended in a pine-apple ; while his lantern-jaws, his prominent Spanish nose, the nose of the true Hidalgo—he boasted his descent from the *Cid* !—all told of that self-esteem that supported him through life, elevated him among his neighbors, and guided every action of his existence—the hero of the immortal Cervantes !

As for the rest, Dolores was Dolores, and Frasco Frasco : yet, though Frasco was nearly as unbeautiful as his father, he was an excellent, honest-hearted fellow. He was full of devotion and sacrifice to the household, deeming his father the most admirable of men, and patient with womankind.

But of *el Chico* I fear I cannot tell the same story ; neither was he at all to my liking. I think of all youngsters he was the laziest. Six feet he measured, and proportionately fat ! Inertia was his *forte*, stolidity his stronghold, and love of dainties his characteristic ! In the morning early, when Don Peppe called the boys to their daily work, Frasco started as if he had been shot from a catapult ; he sprang out of bed just as one plunges into a sea-bath. But Ricardo, *el Chico*, alas, no ! It was like raising the obelisk ! There was but one thing that would rouse him—the smell of pancakes in old Dolores' kettle !

Our bedroom looked upon the sea ; the

floor was laid with large, rough bricks, the resort of innumerable fleas ! At five o'clock Don Peppe opened the big house-door, thick-stanchioned and bullet-proof, as are all doors and windows in the neighborhood of the Sierra Morena, on account of the banditti, who make those mountains their frequent rendezvous. And, indeed, the time came when we ourselves had to quit our quiet retreat, and seek the security of the village from fear of life and limb ; for the Spanish bandit has an unpleasant way of snipping off one's thumbs and fingers, if there is any delay in the payment of a prisoner's ransom, two such instances having fallen under my own knowledge, whilst residing in that sunny land of romance !

At that lonely hour, the most mysterious in nature, when the white, wan light comes creeping over sea and land, ere the first aurora has flushed the east, the traveler in Spain rouses himself for his journey : the hour is called "*la alba*," the white, the tinctless ! Then from the farm-house, the way-side inn, come forth the scattered groups of pedestrians and horsemen and muleteers, who soon form themselves into an endless procession on the highway.

At early morn have I laid and listened to it—the jangling harness of the mules with their tinkling bells, the heavy tramp of hoofs, the call of voices through the darkness, the mysterious, gliding forms, the high, shrill tones of the mule-boys, as they ran by the side of their beasts, rolling their r's and crisping their sonorous Spanish in the air, almost like the crack of a whip-lash—pleasant memories of old times !—and filling the night with mysterious charm and beauty !

Old Peppe opened the door. It was the surveillance of a prudent man. Spain is a land of surprises. Everything may happen, and sometimes a great deal does happen ! It is well to have an eye over one's possessions, night and day. The peasant wakes, perhaps to a gypsy's theft or a tramp's purloinings or the plunder of a sheep-fold ; or, as fortune happens, he goes forth to his morning's work a poor man, and pulling down some old, decayed wall, to make room for a pig-stye, a shower of yellow coin tumbles into the dirt, or a pot of gold-dust is discovered, which makes him rich, comparatively speaking, for the remainder of his days.

One day, in our village, an old woman was scouring the stone-steps before her house with sand ; it saved her a penny at the store, and she was grateful for it. She had found it in the hollow of an old, twisted olive tree ; it was pure gold dust ! It was treasure hidden by the flying Moors (when they left Spain, hoping to return at some future time, and take possession of it), which was thus not unseldom discovered. And, indeed, I knew of other instances, quite enough to make people discontented and unhappy.

But Peppe was opening the door. Instantly every living creature within was in motion. The cock flapped his wings, and flew with his hens through the opening. The ducks paddled out for their first delicious breakfast of mud. The turkeys gobbled, and made a heavy exit. And the flock of pigeons, which roosted all night in the rafters overhead, made a glorious sweep out into the clear blue sky !

Glad was I when the feverish night was passed. Hotter than an oven is a Spanish cottage ; every crack that would admit air or danger is hermetically sealed—for they seem equally afraid of both ventilation and banditti. In hurried the salt, fresh breeze ; and without was the flash of the waves, the sea-gulls on wing, the life and animation of early morn, the movements of men on the beach, the creeping sardine-boats far out at sea, and the whole wide sweep of sail-set waters—all rushing simultaneously on the view, and gladdening my very soul !

But the big, square room was not all our own. Men and cattle had to share it ; one-half was dwelling-place, the other stable ; divided by a barrier of drift-wood and pito-stalks. The chimney-side we kept as our own ; a chimney seeming to have always a home-feeling about it that humanizes the roughest ; but the brute creation we kept apart.

The Spaniards have a habit of naming their larger cattle in a way that is very absurd. For instance, I heard one evening a cowboy, driving home his cattle, calling to a cow, "*Senorita*," "*Senorita*," and abusing her like a pick-pocket. Our two oxen, fine broad-horned beasts, but wild as bulls, rejoiced in the names of "*el Enamorado*" (the enamoured one !), and "*el Estudiante*" (the student !). Our mule was nameless, being a late purchase ; but the donkey



THE FIRST DANCING LESSON.
After a painting by A. Schreder.



was "*Jacquito*." And the pig was only an occasional visitor, when banditti were round or the nights proved rough and stormy. These all stood in a row before hanging cribs attached to the wall. The floor was densely littered with leaves and rubbish ; but the whole affair was to me a great source of annoyance, though the family did not seem to mind it much.

The poultry, too, was another inconvenience that had to be borne. A perch had been constructed from the barrier of drift-wood to the opposite wall of the cottage. Here roosted our hens, above them dwelt the gobbler and his tribe, below on the cobble was the home of the ducks, and overhead, promiscuously scattered, dwelt our parti-colored pigeons ! So that one may well imagine what a stir there was when the door was opened in the morning.

But out of doors I cannot tell you how lovely it was. It was no virtue to rise early, and no power of inertia like that of *Chico's* kept me in bed. For the house-swallows called to you, and would not let you stay. What music has the song-swallow of the Mediterranean shore ! What a charming and comical and piquant song ! A few delicious notes, and then a little turn-up cry at the end, like the twisting of a cork from a thirsty bottle, and then away, away over field and brook, with his fine tailed coat and his arrowy flight ! and then add, if you please, the perfume made of a thousand flowers, picked up by the vagrant winds from garden and orchard and hill-top, covered with thyme, and mixed with the pungent odor of the waves. Never did Lubin, or anybody else, bottle up such an extract of Paradise !

Before us lay the sea, that peerless middle-ocean that has held the world entranced with its centuries of poetry, romance, and beauty ! Perfect in color, deeper, far deeper in hue than the skies above it, substituting for the cold, cobalt tint of the north, the softer and richer ultramarine of the south, the common Italian prints, which startle the eye, do not belie its magnificent blue, however extravagant they may appear. Overhead, a dreamy canopy of sky, capable of wondrous radiances at sunset. And beyond, on the distant horizon, the shores of Africa, with their range of coast-mountains ; while to the right, the rock pinnacle of Gib-

raltar is dimly seen, rising from the mist and haze of the sea. To the left, beyond the horse-shoe curve of the bay, three miles by sea and four by land, lay our village of M—, named by the good queen Isabella, when she and Ferdinand took the fortress from the Moors.

Behind the house lay the foot-hills and the mountain-summits of the Sierra Morena. At sunset these mountains fairly glowed. Their amber clefts, their blue ravines, their tall and lofty pinnacles of rock, bronzed and burned into a thousand tints, were a miracle of color, glowing like a furnace fed with hidden fires, or cooled and toned into lakes and blues and pearl and azure, as the golden haze penetrated their distant, perilous retreats !

But before I close, I must describe one of the chief charms of a Spanish peasant's cottage in summer : its lodge of boughs, its additional summer apartment, built before the door for rest and coolness, its most graceful and characteristic feature, the *sombrajo* !

It was like playing at Robinson Crusoe to build it ; for the whole family, young and old, took part in its construction. First there must be a going-out and a letting-forth. All the cattle are to be removed from their winter quarters, and the house thoroughly cleansed. Spring has come, and with it the *sombrajo* !

The principal material that enters into the construction of this bowery portico is the *pito* or *Agava Americana*. The plant is called *pita*, and its flower-stalk *pito* by the peasantry, and makes a very useful factor in Spanish economy. The Arab might as well be without his date-palm as the Spaniard of the south without his *pito*. A quantity of these stalks are, therefore, the first thing to be procured ; next the long, stout river-reeds are to be obtained ; then the cane-brake to be searched for stout canes ; and, finally, the river-banks must give up their trees of oleander, and the woods their fragrant pine-boughs and underbrush. The whole family are employed in these undertakings, and when all the material has been brought together, the builders begin to build.

Nearly ten feet before the cottage door, and about six feet apart, holes are dug in the ground for planting the tallest and

strongest pito-stalks. From top to top a horizontal line of stalks connects these uprights, and is secured to them by cords of *esparto* grass. Then another row of *pitos* is laid from the scalloped eaves of the roof to meet this horizontal line, bound to the uprights. Canes are then interwoven with the *pitos* overhead, making a cross-network; and thus the frame-work is finished. Next

comes a thickly-matted, ground-layer of reeds, hanging down at the sides in graceful, sheaf-like festoons; lastly, the shrubbery, the pine-boughs, and the oleanders. Before night-fall the work is done. And here through the summer days, and late into the summer nights, will sound the castinette and the guitar, the jest and the song of the Spanish peasant.

THE STORY OF MY ESCAPE FROM A RUSSIAN PRISON.

BY NICOLAS SAKNEY.

[Concluded from the November Number.]

III.

LIFE IN EXILE.

THE sledge was pulled up at the police office. On alighting I was taken before the *ispravnik* (chief-of-police), who had to give the gendarmes a formal acknowledgment of my arrival. This done, he asked me sundry questions touching my age, profession, and social standing, and required me to sign an undertaking to conform to all the prescriptions of the authorities; to do nothing without first notifying them of my intention; neither to write nor receive letters without first showing them to the authorities; nor to pass beyond the limits of the town. After counselling me as to my conduct, and promising that he would do his best to obtain for me, in the course of a few months, the usual government allowance of eight roubles (about fifteen shillings) a month, the *ispravnik* was good enough to say that he had done with me.

"But how am I to live in the meantime?" I asked.

"That is your affair. Live as you can," was all the answer I got to this (for me) rather momentous question.

Seeing that I had neither a kopeck in my pocket, nor the most remote idea where in that wretched, hyperborean town I could get either food or shelter, it was, I may say, a very momentous question.

But fortune befriended me. As I walked about Mesen's single street, wondering what would become of me, I was greeted by a Jew,

who inquired, politely enough, if I was not a "political," to which question I, of course, said "yes." He then observed that, being a new-comer, I had doubtless need of a room, and that he could find me comfortable quarters hard by.

"I have, indeed, great need of quarters," I replied; "but I am unfortunately without money. Would it be possible to get a little credit until I obtain money from home?"

Whereupon the obliging Israelite proposed to lend me twenty roubles at the rate of twenty-five per cent. per month. Too much overjoyed to think about the rate, I accepted the offer without hesitation, took the money, and accompanied my more than cent-for-cent friend to an *isba* (peasant's wooden house), where I got, for three roubles a month, a room of which I straightway took possession; and, throwing myself on the little bed, without taking off my clothes, slept soundly the rest of the day and all the following night.

The next day I began to study the country, and to consider what I should do, for I was unsophisticated enough to imagine that a man of my education and abilities would have no difficulty in finding employment, even at Mesen. I was soon undeceived.

Mesen, though called a town, is in all essentials a village. The population, including exiles (of whom there are many), does not exceed fifteen hundred souls. The only industries are fishing and hunting, and as the natives do all their own work, strangers, even if they are artisans, have no chance of

employment. Agriculture there is next to none, as owing to the severity of the climate and the unkindliness of the soil, the only cereal that can be grown (and that with great difficulty) is a little barley. As for fishing and hunting, even if an exile was sufficiently robust and expert, the rule forbidding him to tread beyond the precincts of the town would be an effectual bar to his engaging in these pursuits.

It is to this inhospitable region, a region where no work is to be had, and it is almost impossible to live, that the Russian government consigns hundreds of men, whose sole crime, for the most part, is having been suspected by a functionary or denounced by a spy. People that have been tried by a tribunal and found guilty, are sent elsewhere. There were Jews, suspected of smuggling; army officers, who had not shown sufficient deference to their superiors in rank; workmen, who had dared to join in a strike; peasants, who had failed to pay their taxes; Poles, who had refused to be Russified; mountaineers of the Caucasus, who had shown disinclination to fight against the Turks in the last war, and so on, and so on.

None of these people had anything to do, and all that they had to live on, unless they were helped by their friends, was the government allowance, eight roubles a month for nobles, four for the others (when they could get it), four or five months generally elapsing between a man's arrival and the receipt of his first month's pay. If the political exiles did not club their scanty means together, and make a common fund, they could hardly live at all, and it is not surprising that the others should commit crimes for the sole purpose of getting sent to prison, where, at any rate, they are sure of shelter and food.

Under any circumstances, enforced idleness amid these ignoble surroundings, would be sufficiently trying to a class of men that from their childhood have been accustomed to intellectual labor; but, as if this were not enough, they are continually exposed to the petty tyranny and insulting opinions of thick-witted policemen and illiterate jacks-in-office! The rules that regulate their lives are stupid, irritating, and degrading to the last degree.

Those of them that are doctors are not allowed to practice; disobedience to this order

is punished by deprivation of their instruments and books, in the last resort by imprisonment. Teachers are forbidden to give lessons; men of letters are not permitted to get their books printed, or otherwise follow their calling; no exile can act either as book-keeper or clerk in a house of business, or as a municipal or government functionary; and at Mesen, no political exiles were allowed to work in a saw-mill a few miles outside the town, although the proprietor had need of intelligent employés, and could have found a few of us something to do.

Doctor Rojestvensky, one of the companions of my exile, tried for propaganda in 1877 and acquitted, but arrested again and banished by administrative order, because he had been acquitted, made an attempt to exercise his profession at Mesen, not for his own benefit, but for the good of the inhabitants. The only doctor in the district was an old gentleman of eighty, so infirm that he could not leave his own house, and when it became known that Rojestvensky practised the healing art, patients came to him from all directions, and his services were greatly appreciated. But one fine day the police made a descent on his house, seized his instruments, destroyed his drugs, and charged him with the heinous offence of curing people contrary to regulations. In the result, Doctor Rojestvensky was sent to another place of exile, even less delectable than Mesen.

Another exile was so much worried and harrassed by the police, that after two unsuccessful attempts to escape, he committed suicide (1879).

In my time the *ispravnik* was a certain Bogdanofsky, a man not only illiterate (he could hardly write his own name), but ever more stupid and meddlesome than the ordinary Russian police functionary. The mistakes that he made were really laughable, though they were often no laughing matter for us. Shortly after my arrival at Mesen, he appeared in my room, accompanied by two soldiers.

"I have come to look at your books and papers," said the *ispravnik*.

Whereupon he proceeded to overhaul and examine all my letters and literary belongings. Seeing an English edition of one of Lecky's books in a blue binding, he made a prize of it, with many expressions of

satisfaction, and declared his intention of sending it to the governor of the province.

"What on earth for?" I asked. "It is a scientific work, admitted everywhere."

"Come, come; that won't go down with me. I know you fellows. Don't think you can take me in," answered the *ispravnik*, sarcastically. "I shall do exactly as I say."

So the book was sent, accompanied by a formal report from the police inspector, who gave it as his opinion that the fact of being in possession of a "blue book" showed that I was in "dangerous relations" with the English government!

I learnt afterwards the meaning of all this. The friend to whom the work in question belonged had written a short time before asking me to return his "blue book" (referring to the binding), which I had taken away with me by mistake. The letter in which this phrase occurred was handed to the *ispravnik*, and the sapient gentleman, having heard something of the blue books of the English parliament, jumped to the conclusion that I was in correspondence with the English government, and therefore, in some sense guilty of treason.

After this portentous discovery, the inspector insisted not only on reading but editing all my letters. He went through them "with a wet pen," erasing everything that did not please him, or that he thought might not be salutary for me to read; and when the letters came into my hands they were often illegible. This measure rendered correspondence almost impossible, and practically cut me off from communication with my friends. What was the use of writing letters that might be mutilated past comprehension, or, as frequently happened, suppressed altogether?

Moreover, the *ispravnik* sends a monthly report about you to head-quarters, and you are lucky indeed if he does not describe you as an evil-disposed person, and put your conduct in the most unfavorable light—all to show how clever and zealous he is.

If an exile remains at home reading and sleeping, he is set down as discontented, and consequently dangerous. If, on the contrary, he receives visitors and makes friends among the inhabitants, he is suspected of a design to propagate revolutionary ideas, and denounced accordingly: in all probability,

punished without a hearing; for there is nothing the police at head-quarters like so well and encourage so much as secret denunciation.

Here is a case in point from my own experience. Walking one day in the single street of Mesen, I met a tipsy officer, who asked me to go with him to a tavern, and stand a drink. I refused. On this, he took hold of my coat collar, and began to buffet me. I naturally returned his blow with interest, and after a short struggle put him to flight. And then, what does the rascal do but go straight to the police office and write a denunciation, in which I was accused of striking a devoted officer for no other reason than because he would not allow me to insult the emperor, and of going about the town sowing sedition and exciting discontent!

Notwithstanding the baseness and absurdity of these charges, and the fact that they were made by a drunken man, the *ispravnik* forwarded the denunciation to the governor, and a few days thereafter the procurator, accompanied by several gendarmes, came down to make an inquiry, which, however, for lack of proof, resulted in nothing.

Volkoff, one of my fellow exiles, was less fortunate. A similar and equally baseless denunciation cost him six months' close imprisonment.

Another time, the police found in the possession of a man that they arrested for drunkenness a book, entitled "Secret Advice to Young Men." "Secret advice" savored of sedition, and the *ispravnik* gravely informed the governor that he had captured a confirmed propagandist, who occupied himself with the dissemination of dangerous literature. Again came the procurator and his gendarmes, only to discover that the inspector had found another mare's nest, the book in question having nothing to do with politics, but a good deal with medicine and morals. Morals, however, the czar's police do not trouble themselves about, and unclean literature, so long as it is unclean and nothing more, they regard with philosophic indifference.

Incidents like these happen every day. Exiles are in continual fear of being denounced. Except in presence of intimate friends, they hardly dare open their mouths, for they know only too well that the most harmless expression may be misconstrued,

and a slip of the tongue bring upon them denunciation and punishment. Nor is this state of things peculiar to Mesen. The whole of educated Russia is under the same tyranny, and more or less exposed to the same pains and penalties.

IV.

THE ESCAPE.

AFTER two years of this worse than slavery (for a slave may at least work, and is provided with board and lodgings), I felt that I could bear it no longer ; that come what might I would try to escape. But how ?

On three sides Mesen is bounded by impassable bogs, on the fourth by the river. These bogs are not merely dangerous ; they are uninhabited, so that even if a fugitive should escape being engulfed, he could get neither food nor shelter. If he avoided the Scylla of suffocation, it would only be to fall into the Charybdis of starvation. The sole landing out of Mesen is the great high-road leading southward. But a man that followed that road would surely be taken, if not at the first station, then at the second, or the third ; and as a matter of fact, I learned from the townsfolk and my fellow-exiles that, albeit many attempts had been made, not one had succeeded.

There remained only the sea. Unless I could get away by water I could not get away at all.

Now, it so happened that some twenty versts from Mesen, at a point where the river joins the ocean, there was a large saw-mill whose owner, Mr. Roussanoff, carried on, during the short summer, a trade in timber with England and Germany, and there were occasionally two or three English and German steamships lying at anchor off the mill, and taking in cargoes.

If I could only get on board one of them and persuade the captain to take me as passenger ! But herein lay the whole difficulty. The exiles were strictly forbidden to go near the mill, and no communication of any sort between them and the vessels was allowed. So strictly was this rule enforced, that once, when somebody was seriously ill on one of the steamers, the *ispravnik* refused permission to an exile-doctor to visit the sick man, albeit a pressing request to that effect had been made by the captain.

For further security, the river banks were closely watched by warders especially appointed for the purpose, while actual access to the vessels was debarred by Russian sentinels, who were supposed to pace the decks night and day ! So if I did get away by sea, I had first of all to evade those watchers and warders, and then to prevail on the skipper, not only to give me a passage, but to keep me in hiding until his ship sailed, for to be seen by the sentinel would be ruin. The worst of it was, that I should have no chance of sounding the captain beforehand, or even of communicating with him. All the same I resolved to make the attempt, since, whatever might befall, my position could not easily be made much worse.

My first step was to gain over a fisherman, who for a consideration agreed to run me alongside whichever of the steamers I might select. But he would do no more. The moment I left his boat he would leave me. He stood in such fear of the police, that he refused, at any price, to wait the issue of my negotiations with the captain, so that, if I failed to secure a passage, detection would be inevitable. There were two or three vessels—one English, the others German—at anchor off the saw-mill. I naturally chose the English vessel, for if I landed in a German port, I should almost surely be recaptured and given up to the Russian police, for whom their German colleagues are always glad to act the part of jackals.

All being arranged, I stole from my lodgings one dark and rainy autumnal night, and succeeded in reaching the boat unperceived. We dropped down the river with the ebb tide, the fisherman taking the oars and I the helm. To avoid being noticed by fishing boats, which were pulling out to sea, we preserved the strictest silence, never speaking above a whisper.

After two hours rowing among the sand-banks that impede the navigation of the Mesen, we arrived off the saw-mill, and a few minutes later were close to the British steamer, easily recognizable by her lights. All was quiet on board, and with the exception of one man, who was pacing the quarter-deck, everybody seemed to be asleep.

"Stop rowing," I whispered.

Who was this man ? If a Russian soldier, detection would be certain, ruin inevitable.

If an English sailor, there was still hope ; all might be well. What was to be done ? After a moment's hesitation, I decided to make the attempt, come what might. To turn back now, when the haven of safety was in sight, would be sheer poltroonery.

"Forward !" I muttered to my companion, and the next moment we were under the steamer's quarter.

"Hello ! Who is that ?" shouted the man on deck, in English.

It was not the sentinel then. I breathed once more.

"I have an important dispatch for the captain," I answered, standing up, raising my arm and showing as well as I could a letter that I had written beforehand in the best English at my command, explaining my position, and asking the captain's help and hospitality.

The word "dispatch" had such a magical effect on the sailor that he threw me a rope, and helped me on deck. At the same moment my fisherman, fearing to be seen by the sentinel or some other body that might betray him to the police, had shoved his boat off, and disappeared in the darkness.

Retreat was now out of the question. I had only two chances : either England and liberty, or Mesen and a gaol, with the possible alternative of a term of penal servitude in Siberia.

The sailor that had hailed me took me to the captain. As for the sentinel, whom I had so much feared, he was fast asleep, and suspected nothing.

I found the captain in shirtsleeves and slippers examining a chart, doubtless the chart of the White Sea. He looked at me, as I thought, rather dubiously. Without saying a word I handed him the letter, and awaited my fate. Everything now depended on him. After explaining in indifferent English who I was, and how ardently I desired to get out of the clutches of the Russian police, I besought his help as the citizen of a free country, which had always sympathized with the victims of tyranny and oppression.

When the captain had read my letter, he gave me a sharp, inquiring look, not, perhaps, unmixed with distrust.

"Who has sent me this letter ? Who is the writer ?" he asked.

"I am the writer," I answered.

"You ?" and he glanced suspiciously at my ragged clothes, dripping with wet. "Oh, it is you that proposes to become my passenger ? Where do you want to go ?"

"That does not matter. Anywhere you like, out of this place."

"Well, I am going to London, and if the police will give you a permit to leave, I shall be glad to take you with me.

This was alarming, if seriously meant. But, perhaps, the captain was joking, or did not understand my rather eccentric English. I besought him to read my letter a second time, and I tried to explain every word. Then he began to understand. A pleasant smile lighted up his bronzed and manly face.

"You are a political transport, an enemy of the Russian government ?" he asked.

"Yes, captain, I am a political transport, and it is in your power to save me from the Russian police. If you refuse to let me go with you, and to keep me in hiding till your ship sails, I shall be lost. In merely trying to get away from this place, I should be punished by several months' imprisonment. But I felt sure that an Englishman would not deliver a poor fugitive to his enemies ; therefore, I trusted you. My fate is in your hands."

The captain reflected a moment. He was evidently perplexed and in doubt what to do ; naturally, for he had only my word for it that I was a political exile. I might be a common convict, and in any case helping me might get him into serious trouble.

"All right !" he exclaimed at last. "I believe your story, and you shall go with me. But, until we weigh anchor, which will be in about forty-eight hours, you must not be seen."

"But suppose the police make you a visit, and search the ship ?"

"Let them. They won't come into my cabin. If they do—" he said, pointing significantly to a revolver, which lay close to his hand.

All my disquietude disappeared. I felt that fortune had thrown me in the way of a brave man, in whom I might put the most entire trust.

The captain rose from his chair, and with his own hands made up a bed in a little cabin next to his own, which he used as a dressing-room, and of which he gave me the key.

"There," he said, "lock yourself in, and only open it when I knock three times."

"And the sailor that brought me to you, is there nothing to fear from him? Will he not inform the police?"

"Not he. I can answer for my men. You have nothing to fear from them."

On the following day I made the acquaintance of the chief engineer and the first officer, both of whom breakfasted and dined with the captain. At each meal-time the preconcerted signal, three knocks at the door, announced that all was safe, whereupon I left my hiding-place, and joined them at table. Twice on these occasions the steward rushed in to warn us that "Russians were coming on deck," on which, though they belonged to the saw-mill and not to the police, I lost no time in retreating to my hiding-place.

In the evenings, when we were free from interruption, we had long talks. I told them the story of my life. We talked about Russia, and what I should do in England. Mr. Peter Kean (for so my good friend was called) was a very intelligent man, much beloved by his crew, and always in good humor. He had spent nearly all his life at sea, and liked nothing better than to talk of his voyages and adventures.

When I told him that I intended to occupy myself with literature, he smiled rather contemptuously.

"Do you call that an occupation? You would do better to stay in London, study the language, and let me get you a place in some business house. In the meantime I will help you."

The captain was right, but at that time I had other plans, and Paris had irresistible attractions for me.

On the first favorable opportunity I offered to pay for my passage. But Captain Kean would not hear of it.

"Why do you want me to take your money?" he said, smiling pleasantly. "It is so seldom one has a chance of doing a fellow-creature a kindness! It would be nothing less than a shame to let you pay. You cannot be well off, and if you want a

little money, you have only to speak. I shall be very glad to lend you some."

And so the forty-eight hours passed. Shortly before the expiration of this time, the captain had the usual official visit from the police, and, hidden in my little cabin, I heard him invite them into his room and offer them gin and beer, which, I hardly need say, they took. They little knew that I was within the sound of their voices, concealed on the vessel where night and day a sentinel was supposed to be continually on the watch. But my boatman had kept my secret, and the authorities of Mesen, not having a suspicion that I was escaping by sea, were looking for me in every direction but the right one.

On the morning of the third day after my arrival on board, the steamer weighed anchor, and shaped her course for England. An hour later, Captain Kean knocked at my door.

"Come out!" he cried gaily. "You have nothing more to fear. You are now under the protection of the British flag."

I went out, and throwing my arms round his neck, thanked him with all my heart for his kindness and generosity. Then he sent for wine, and we drank to England and Liberty.

Ten days afterwards we were in the Thames, and the time came for me to part with my dear friend and benefactor, who, during the voyage, had lavished on me every possible kindness and attention. I passed a whole day with him in London. He helped me to find some Russian friends, and introduced me to his wife and little girl.

"Let me again advise you to remain in England," he urged on the last day we were together. "I undertake to find you a place."

But my mind was made up. I left London and Mr. Kean. He accompanied me to the station, gave me his address, asked me never to forget him, and said that he would always remain my friend. We shook hands and parted, and I have never seen him since.



A PINK OF PERFECTION.

BY CLARA F. GUERNSEY.

I.

ONCE upon a time there was a king and queen, who had been married many years, and had no heir to their kingdom. Such being the state of the case, you may suppose that the king and the queen, and the people with them, were much delighted when the queen gave them a little prince, whom every one declared to be the most beautiful baby ever born.

Now, the country where this king ruled bordered on fairyland, and the fairies were in the habit of interfering in the affairs of their mortal neighbors—sometimes for good, sometimes for ill. However, from all we can learn of these powerful beings, they were usually very pleasant when they were pleased; but, like other people whom this saying fits, the trouble often seemed to be to find out what would please them. If you displeased them, you might look out for storms.

Royal families were their special care, and though, as history shows, they often bestowed wonderful gifts, the princes and princesses whom they patronized sometimes suffered terrible misfortunes, owing to the peculiar tempers of their patrons, and the odd conditions often coupled with their benefits.

Of course, when this little Prince was born, the fairies of the highest rank were asked to the feast given in his honor, and the most elegant presents were prepared for

them, for fairies, though they like to give gifts, like to receive them too.

The queen was very nervous for fear she had, by chance, left out some one who would spite her little boy in consequence, for she was a cousin of the Sleeping Beauty, and knew what might happen in such a case.

However, all went as well as possible. Six fairy ladies, the especial friends of the family, had been invited. They all came in their most gorgeous array, and were extremely gracious. They professed themselves greatly pleased with the presents provided for them. They admired the baby, they made the nurse a splendid offering, and all this being done, they prepared to endow the little Prince with gifts far more valuable than gold or jewels, and for this purpose they went up to the nursery, where the child was asleep in a silver cradle.

The queen went with them of course, and in her train went about thirty of the sisters and cousins and aunts of the royal family. The queen threw back the curtain of the cradle. The six fairies ranged themselves about it, three on a side; the other ladies stood back in silence. The king and his cabinet, who were only allowed to stand in the hall, peeped through a crack in the door.

Everyone watched the fairies in awe-struck silence, everyone but an old black cat, which lay before the fire, purring like a spinning-wheel, and which did not even trouble herself

to notice the array. She was a stray cat, and the nurse had encouraged her, because, as everyone knows, black cats bring good luck.

"I," said the old fairy, waving her wand, "promise that the prince shall be the most beautiful person of his age."

"Dear me!" thought the queen. "Why, he is that already."

"I," said the second, "promise that he shall acquire all knowledge without any trouble."

"He was sure to be bright," thought the king. "Isn't he my son?"

"Did you mean he should marry her?" said a quick, sharp voice.

Everyone started and gazed about, but the fairies looked more surprised than anyone else, and all fixed their eyes on the old black cat, which was switching her tail about, and glaring at the fairy Opal with a pair of green eyes as big as an owl's.

"Why, certainly, pussy," said Opal, and it did not escape the queen that all the fairies seemed a little afraid of the old cat.

"Then, why didn't you say so?" snapped the cat. "Lead to the altar *indeed!* One

Maud Humphrey 1886.



"I," said the third, "promise that he shall always have good health."

"Of course," thought the nurse. "Haven't I the care of him?"

"He shall have immense riches," said the fourth.

"That's something like it," thought all present.

"He shall live a hundred years," said the fifth.

"Very likely," thought the king's old grandmother. "Our's is a long-lived family."

"He shall lead to the altar the loveliest princess in the world," said the sixth fairy, whose name was Opal.

would think you were talking local items! Since you are all giving gifts, I'll give one too. When he is twenty-one he shall show himself out for exactly what he is. Fiz-*tt*."

And the old black cat went up the chimney like a streak.

"Goodness me! What was that?" said the king, through the crack in the door.

"It—it was the cat!" sobbed the queen, who was much frightened.

"It's all your fault, Opal," said the oldest fairy.

"You must use such fine language," said the next.

And they all found fault with her one after another.

"After all," said Opal, "what harm is done. We have made him a piece of perfection. He can't but appear so."

"Is it one of your sisters, I should have asked?" said the queen, a little comforted.

"No," said the oldest fairy. "No. She is not a fairy. She is—in short, she is the cat, and I can tell you no more."

All the fairies encouraged the king and queen to think that nothing but good was meant by the cat's prediction, but at the same time every one felt rather uneasy, and wished it had not been made.

II.

THE Prince, who was called Pink-of-Perfection, grew up as the fairies had prophesied. He was so handsome that he was quite dazzling. He never had a day's illness. He learned all that his tutors could teach him with such wonderful facility, that at sixteen they declared that he had finished his education.

He could repeat all his text-books from one end to the other, he knew the dates of all historic events, and he could do the most astonishingly long sums in his head. When he was a baby, great mines of gold had been found on the crown lands; riches flowed in like water. Nothing seemed wanting to make the Prince the exact representative of his name; and yet, it was secretly, very secretly whispered, that the Prince was a dreadful bore. And there was not a single young fellow of his own age that really liked him.

His father and mother, who felt and said, rather too often, how much superior was their son to other people's sons, deep down in their hearts had a conviction that some way their Pink-of-Perfection might have been improved either by the addition or subtraction of something, they couldn't tell what.

He was always correcting other people in their grammar and syntax, and he had the rules, fine print and all, at his finger's-ends. But when he tried to make a speech in counsel, he hemmed and hawed and could not bring his sentences to any conclusion, and it was a misery only to hear him; whereas, the old king, whose youth had been passed in fighting times, and who had scrambled up his education any way, could speak eloquently, and to the purpose.

It was just so in other matters. The Prince

knew just how everything ought to be done, but he never seemed to know how to do it. He could repeat the most beautiful sentiments about virtue and self-denial, but he had a rooted conviction (and acted up to it) that he was first, and other people nowhere, except as they ministered to his pleasure.

He knew the whole book of etiquette, and was always quoting it. But he rebuked his own great grandmother for turning out her tea in a saucer, and corrected a very old king, who was visiting at his father's court, for saying "sparrow grass" instead of asparagus. He had never been known to give up his own way in his life.

His mother said he was "very firm;" his father said he was "obstinate;" but the old prime-minister called him "pig-headed."

There was one person, however, in whose eyes the Prince was perfect, and that was the Princess Florimel, to whom he had been betrothed in his cradle. She was a daughter of King Ulph, and was the most beautiful girl ever seen. All that Pink-of-Perfection did or said was right in her eyes. She accepted all his criticisms with entire meekness. She tried to form herself exactly on his model, and in common phrase she worshipped the ground he walked on.

King Ulph, however, did not get on very well with his son-in-law elect, which was a great grief to Florimel, who was his only child. King Ulph was of the race of Odin, and he found it difficult and often impossible to be civil to Prince Pink-of-Perfection when he came on a visit. Had it not been for Florimel's love for her betrothed, he would have broken off the match, desirable as it was for reasons of state. King Ulph had heard, however, of the black cat's prediction, and he insisted that the wedding should not take place till the Prince's twenty-first birthday.

The twenty-first birthday was drawing nigh, and great preparations were made for the wedding, which was to take place at King Ulph's castle. The bridegroom's family had wished the bride to come to them, in accordance with the etiquette of their court, but King Ulph had said, with a great stamp of his foot, "there or nowhere," and they conceded the point.

The fairies had been invited to the wedding, but they sent polite excuses, accom-

panied by the most magnificent presents. The wedding was fixed for the evening, and when the whole day passed and nothing happened, the king and queen were much relieved. The Prince had never been at all disturbed. He said it was all a delusion and mistake about the black cat. All the natural history books showed that cats could not speak. The utmost advance a cat could make was to look at a king.

III.

ALL agreed as the wedding train moved into the chapel that never had been seen so beautiful a bride and groom. Everything about the wedding had been done regardless of expense, and, of course, the climax of all this splendor was the Princess Florimel, in her white lace and pearls.

"She is ten times too good for him," said King Ulph aside to his old minister.

"She likes him," said the old man.

"If it wasn't for that, I'd forbid the banns even now," said the king, as the bridal pair took their places before the altar. "I'd— Hallo !"

King Ulph broke short off and stared; so did every one else. Then arose a universal scream of horror. What was the matter? There, in the bridegroom's place, beside the Princess Florimel, was a great, fat, white pig, a pig that looked about him with such an air of complacency, and grunted in a tone of such self-satisfaction, that every one felt sure that, pig as he was, he was still Prince Pink-of-Perfection. Indeed, on being asked if he were, the pig squealed so indignantly, and curled up his tail in such a haughty manner, that no doubt remained that a horrible transformation had taken place, and then every one remembered that the Prince had been born at exactly eight o'clock in the evening. The fairy Opal's prediction had been fulfilled to the letter. He had led his Princess to the altar, and no farther.

Who can describe the scene that followed, the anguish and despair of the parents and the bride, the wonder of the courtiers, the resignation, to say the least, of King Ulph,



and the secret satisfaction of numerous young men, who had always thought the Princess "too good for that fellow."

The bride was carried out in a swoon, and, of course, the wedding could not go on, though the pig seemed to think it should, and was dragged squealing, grunting, and resisting from the chapel.

The Princess, when she came to herself, would fain have followed her lover, but King Ulph would not hear of it, and Prince Pink's father and mother did not encourage the idea, and they were decidedly cool to Florimel, for they felt as if it were her fault and her father's that she had not married their son before.

On reaching home they sent a special courier for the fairies, who came and sym-

pathized deeply ; but alas ! they could do nothing.

"The old black cat has been too many for us," sighed the oldest fairy.

Here the pig squealed impatiently. He was trying to tell his godmother that, while "cat" was singular, "too many" expressed a plural idea, and being a fairy she understood him.

"After all," said the oldest fairy, "there is only the difference of one letter between a pig and a prig."

"At least," said the fairy Opal, who felt a little blame in the matter, "at least, your son is a learned pig."

But there was very little comfort in that, and the fairies departed, saying that nothing could be done, unless they could find the old black cat, but though every effort was made, and though there were black cats in plenty in the country, the particular cat wanted was not to be found, and a pig the Prince remained.

IV.

It was a month after the wedding-day. The Princess Florimel had gone out alone into the wood behind her father's castle. She was utterly miserable, and pig as the Prince was she longed to be with him, and comfort him in his wretchedness.

Now, the fact was, that the Prince was not wretched at all, for he had not realized that any such change had taken place. As a pig he had all a pig could wish for, and was satisfied. He had forgotten the Princess entirely, but Florimel did not know that, and was dying of grief.

She wandered on a long way through the forest, till she came to where a clear spring came running out of a grey rock. Here she sat down from pure weariness, and covering her face with her hands, wept till she could weep no more.

"M-u-r-r !" sounded close to her, and something warm and soft as velvet touched her face.

The Princess started. A great black pussy cat was on her lap, looking at her with a most affectionate expression. As the Princess looked up, the cat put one paw on each shoulder, and rubbed her head on Florimel's face cat-fashion.

"Poor pussy !" said the Princess, stroking her. "Are you lost?"

The cat laughed. Now, it is very startling

to hear a cat laugh, especially if you are all alone with it in the forest.

"I'm never lost," she said.

"Oh !" cried the Princess, clasping her hands. "You are *the* cat!"

"To be sure," returned the cat, and she began carefully to lick her right paw.

"For mercy's sake," implored the Princess, "restore my Pink-of-Perfection."

The cat made no reply till she had carefully licked her paw all over.

"No one can do that but yourself," she said at last, "though I don't see why you want to do it at all. He is just the same that he always was."

"In mind, of course," said the Princess indignantly ; "but to think of that mind in such a shape." And she wrung her hands.

"Oh, what can I do?"

The cat looked at Florimel with her queer, green eyes, half contemptuous, half kind.

"You can restore him," she said ; "but it will need a great sacrifice."

"Never mind," said Florimel impatiently. "What does that matter. Tell me."

"You must go to the Jumping-off-Place, where the north-east wind lives when he is at rest, and ask him to give you from his crystal cup some of the wine of real appearances. When your pig drinks it, he will look just as he did before to the world," added the cat, after a short pause, and she winked with one eye, which in a cat is not vulgar.

"Show me the way," said the Princess.

"That's not all. You must go on foot."

"I will."

"You will see danger and hardship."

"I don't care."

"You may die on the way."

"I'll take the chance."

"And to sum up," said the cat, "from the moment you start you will lose all your beauty. Your skin will turn yellow, your hair will come out, and you will look like a poor, forlorn, old woman, in the poorest dress."

"So be it," said Florimel firmly. "Welcome anything ; so I restore my love, I don't care!"

"But may be he will," said the cat coolly. "Do you suppose he'll love you then?"

"I know he will," said the Princess steadily, though she grew pale. "Do I not

love him more than ever before? And If he does not, no matter, so long as he is saved. When can I go?"

"Now," said the cat.

"My father," said the Princess.

"I'll tell him," said the cat. "Come, I'm glad to see you can think of some one beside your precious Pink. Take three hairs out of the tip of my tail, and put them into that locket you have with your fine lover's picture, and they will always point you the way to the Jumping-off-Place. The Princess did as directed, and in an instant the clear spring, which but a moment before had re-

flected a lovely girl in velvet robes, now showed a poor, bent, wrinkled, old woman, in the poorest peasant clothes.

The Princess shuddered, and put her hands before her face.

"You can turn back yet," said the cat.

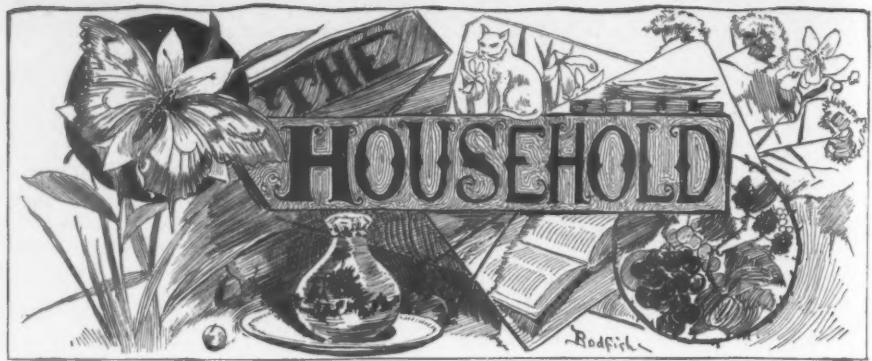
"No," said Florimel firmly.

"You are a great fool," said the cat, kissing her. "But you will never know that till you find it out for yourself. Good-bye, child. I'll see your father." And away she ran.

[To be concluded in the next number.]



MAMMA'S LITTLE PET.
Painted by Eugene Klimasch.



SUGAR-PLUMS.

BY MRS. HENRY BROWN.

WHATEVER treasure the Christmas stocking may contain, the child's stocking that holds no sugar-plums will be empty indeed; and whether the prize be taffy at two for a cent or French bon-bons, sweets there must be to bring content. In order that there may not be, as one child calls it, "a day-after-Christmas taste in your mouth," it is best to make these sweets as pure and wholesome as possible.

Money may be saved, first-class candies had, and much pleasure given by making the candies at home two or three days before Christmas. In this work, which is clean, light, and easy, all but the youngest members of the family may assist. By making your own candies, fifty cent mixtures may be had at a cost of twenty-five and thirty cents. A club of young girls in New York, using many of the following recipes, have become so skilled in making French candies that they have, for several years, added from twenty-five to forty dollars to a certain charity in which they are interested, by taking orders for Christmas candies among their friends.

Take some evening for your work when, with your assistants, you may be "sole occupants" of the kitchen; yes, and dining-room too. Start with the proviso that every one that assists is to wash one's own dishes. Wash your hands, put on a clean apron, and begin. It is best to make the cooked candies in one room, and the uncooked French

candies in another, or to make them on different evenings. Have on hand fresh eggs, confectioner's sugar (which is another name for XXX powdered sugar, costing ten cents a pound), raisins, baker's chocolate, oranges, lemons, vanilla, peppermint, and wintergreen flavors, maple sugar, good cooking molasses, and glycerine. Provide yourself also with roasted peanuts, almonds, English walnuts, or hickory nuts, fresh figs and dates, and a small quantity of cochineal syrup, to be used as a pink coloring matter.

Of course, not all these ingredients are positively necessary, as only one or two varieties of candy may be made, but if two or three families are making together, or the candies are made for sale, it is best to have a tempting variety. The nuts, figs, oranges, etc., may be bought in small quantities if for one home, as they are best when fresh. The other materials will, of course, keep until next time.

A cream made of confectioner's sugar is the basis of all uncooked candies. Small quantities are easiest handled, and the work is so simple that, if a sufficient quantity is not made at first, more is easily manufactured.

Take a good-sized bowl, and break into it the white of one, two, or more eggs, and add to it an *exactly* equal quantity of cold water. Then stir in confectioner's sugar slowly until you have it stiff enough to be moulded into shape by the fingers. Flavor to taste with any essence liked best. Vanilla

is always safe. Mould the paste into balls about the size of a large marble, into egg-shapes, cubes, squares, or lozenge-shapes, and lay upon a platter or waxed paper to dry.

Flavor a part of the French cream made with peppermint or winter-green essence to taste, mould into lozenges, set to dry, and you will have three varieties of candy finished. Mould some of the cream flavored with vanilla into balls about the size of a twenty-five cent piece, have ready some English walnuts, cracked so as to divide nicely in halves, and press half of the nut on each side of the ball of cream. Set to dry, and they will be ready to eat in a few hours.

Chocolate creams are a favorite kind of candy. To make, mould small bits of the cream flavored with vanilla into a cone shape, and set to dry. Melt some baker's chocolate in a bowl set over a boiling tea-kettle. When the creams are dry, take them one by one on a hair pin or fork, and roll in the melted chocolate until thoroughly coated. Set aside to dry. Should the chocolate cool before you have finished, place over the tea-kettle again, or better still, stand it while using in a pan of hot water.

Another delicious variety may be made by working into the cream the juice and grated rind of an orange. Should the juice make the French cream too thin, add more sugar before moulding into shape. Make into balls the size of a hickory nut. Lemon creams may be made in the same way, by substituting lemon juice and rind for orange.

Another kind of sweet is easily made by removing the seeds from the nicest and freshest of dates, and inserting in place of the seed a long, narrow roll of the French cream, and closing the date over it. Fig creams may be made in the same way, or by cutting the figs into four or five length-wise strips, and inserting them in a piece of the cream moulded in an oblong shape, and then cut open and closed over the fig.

Most melting candies may also be made by using fruit jellies and jam (especially currant and plum jelly and berry jam) or pineapple preserves. Cut the fruit into small squares or oblongs, and inclose it in a coating of the cream; or make squares of the cream, and press a small square of the jelly against it before drying. A tempting candy

is also made by making the cream into cakes about half-an-inch thick (which may be done with a rolling-pin on a marble slab, or making it into a flat ball, laying it on a platter, and patting it until of the right thickness. Make each bar about three inches long, and spread with a layer of jelly or jam; place on this another layer of the cream, then a layer of the filling, and then one of cream. Press well together, and set to dry. If desired, this candy may be cut into squares. In either case, trim the edges smoothly with a sharp knife, so that they may not have a ragged look.

In making cocoanut creams use, if possible, fresh cocoanut; if not, the best brand of desiccated. If fresh cocoanut is used, prepare it the day before using. While mixing the French cream, and before making it thick with the sugar, stir in the cocoanut, then add more sugar, and mould until the cream is stiff enough to make into balls or cakes. If you like, some of the creams may be colored pink, and then rolled in grated cocoanut before set to dry. These are very pretty-looking candies. Grated maple sugar added to the French cream, and moulded into squares, also makes a toothsome candy.

A nut candy, which is a great favorite with most children, is made by chopping several kinds of nuts, say almonds, walnuts, and butternuts, fine. Make a soft cream, and stir in the nuts. Then add enough sugar to mould into shape. Make into large squares or bars, and wrap in waxed paper to keep fresh. Fruit candy, which is not as rich as the nut candy, is made in the same way. Currants, raisins seeded, figs, and a very small quantity of citron, chopped together, make a very nice fruit mixture to put with the French cream. Make into balls; or use first a bar of the cream, then a layer of the fruit, as in the jelly candies. If you wish to color any of your candy brown, add melted chocolate.

Of boiled candies, perhaps none is liked so well as molasses candy and molasses taffy. If the following recipe is followed exactly, success is promised every time. Two cups of sugar, four cups of molasses. Use the same sized cup to measure both molasses and sugar. Two small table-spoonfuls of butter, two table-spoonfuls of glycerine. Put into a kettle, and boil fast twenty-five

minutes. Take care not to scorch. At the end of the time for boiling, put a few drops in cold water. If it hardens and is brittle, remove from the stove. Have ready before the candy stops boiling pans thoroughly buttered, and just before pouring into the pans stir in one tea-spoonful of cream of tartar. After putting into pans, pour a few drops of lemon or vanilla on top. When cool enough, pull until white, and make into sticks. Half this quantity will make enough for a small family.

Taffy is made by boiling hard one cup of molasses, one cup of sugar, and a small table-spoonful of butter. After boiling twenty minutes, test by dropping a little in cold water. If it is brittle, pour into buttered pans, and mark into squares with the back of a case knife.

To make peanut candy, first prepare the nuts by taking off the shells and the brown skin that covers them. Then boil two cups of molasses, one of brown sugar, a piece of butter the size of a small egg, and a table-spoonful of vinegar. Boil until *nearly* brittle, place the peanuts in a buttered pan, pour the candy over them, and cut into squares or bars.

Butter-scotch, the most powerful rival of taffy, is made by using a coffee cup of brown sugar, half a cup of water, and a dessert-spoonful of vinegar; also a piece of butter the size of a hickory nut. Boil twenty minutes. Pour into buttered pans, and cut into narrow strips.

Chocolate caramels are as popular with

grown up children as are taffy and butter-scotch with little ones. To make them, use a cup of molasses, a cup of brown sugar, a cup of milk, and a small table-spoonful of butter. Add to the other ingredients a table-spoonful of glycerine, as in molasses candy. Let the mixture boil fast for twenty minutes, and when nearly done add a cup of grated chocolate. When nearly brittle, pour into buttered pans; crease in squares with the back of a knife when nearly cold. Flavor, if desired, in the same way as molasses candy. If the flavor is put into the candy while cooking, it is lost before the candy is cold.

A cooked French-cream candy, which is very nice and more economical when eggs are scarce than the uncooked cream, may be made by using two cups of granulated sugar, half a cup of hot water. Put the sugar and water into a good tin basin, and let it boil ten minutes. Then test by dropping some from the spoon. If it draws into threads, take the pan from the stove, and try rolling a spoonful into a ball. If it is creamy and moulds easily, pour into a bowl and flavor. If it will not cream when first taken from the stove, boil two or three minutes longer. After it is poured into the bowl, beat rapidly with a large spoon until it all creams. This cream may be rolled or cut with a knife into any shape desired, and be used as the foundation of many kinds of candies, in the same way as the uncooked cream. If in working the cream gets too cold, set the bowl in a pan of hot water.

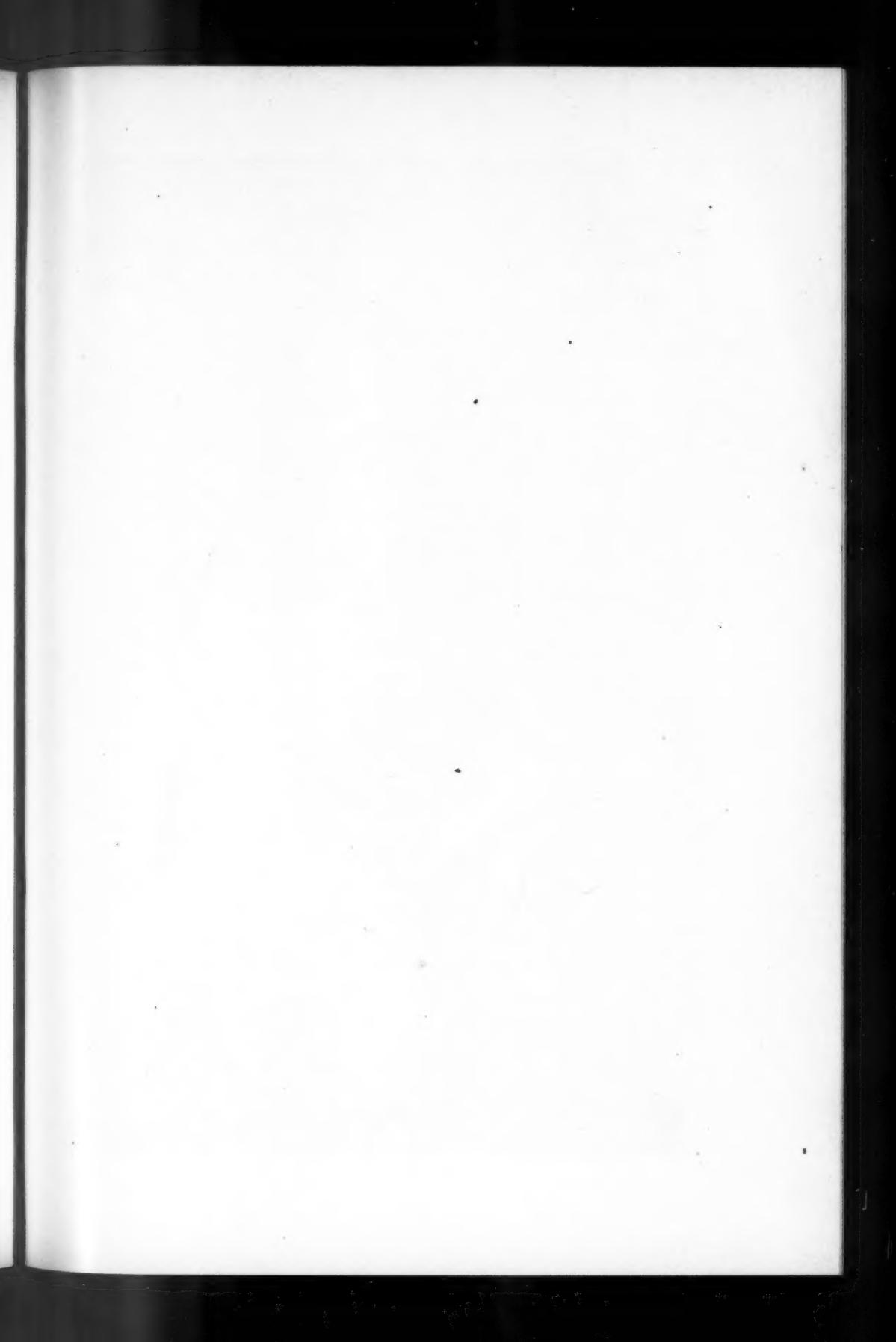
MORNING IN THE SIERRAS.

BY CLARENCE URRY.

ABOVE me rise the sunlit peaks
Where golden sunbeams gleam and quiver,
And far below, toward Golden Gate,
O'er golden sand flows Yuba river.

Through crystal air the mountain mist
Sails far beyond yon distant eagle,
And swift o'er crag, and vale, and hill
Steps Morning, purple-robed and regal.

The while a breeze through cañons deep
Sets all the tall tree-tops in motion,
Bearing a greeting to the pines
From palms beside the Western ocean.



THE CARD PARTY.
After a painting by J. Aranda.

